ton, page 13
wnships, page 15

Tuesday October 24 1995

Abu Dhabi D 8.50 Albania L 220 Andorra FF 8 Austria AS 28 Bahrain BD 0.80 Belgium BF 50 Bulgaria L 120 Croatia KN 12.50 Cyprus CC 0.90 Czech Republic KC45 Denmark DK 14 Dubai D 8.50 Egypt EE 5 Estonia K 30 Finland FM 11 France FF 10 Germany DM 3.50 Greece D 350 Hong Kong HK$ 28 Hungary F 185 Iceland IK 165 India Rs 55 Israel NIS 8.90 Italy L 2,800 Jordan JD 1.00 Kuwait KD 0.50 Latvia US$ 2 Lebanon US$ 1.50 Lithuania US$ 3 Luxembourg LF 55 Madeira E 250 Malta ML 0.43 Morocco D 15 Netherlands G 3.75 Norway NK 15 Oman OR 1.00 Pakistan R 70 Poland Z 5.70 Portugal E 230 Qatar QR 8.50 Russia US$ 2.00 Saudi Arabia R 10 Slovakia SK 45 Slovenia SLT 250 Spain P 200 Sweden SK 15 Switzerland SF 3 Thailand B 80 Tunisia TD 1.750 Turkey TL 95,000 Ukraine US$ 2.00 USA US$ 2.75

The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

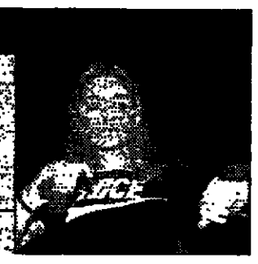
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

46,380

The rise of the superclubs

Ministries of Sound



G2 with European weather

Education

Guardian student media awards results

G2 page 10

Unsolved mysteries

Whatever happened to The Scott Report?

G2 p7. Plus Women in Hollywood p8

Police chaos exposed

Police at work . . . The report calls for big changes in the management of patrols on the streets, as well as a reappraisal of public expectations PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

Leaked report attacks waste and inefficiency

David Hencke, Westminster Correspondent

A SWINGEING attack on mismanagement and waste by *Britain's police* forces of their £4 billion a year "bobbies on the beat" budget has been made by the Audit Commission, the body responsible for getting value for money in public services.

The confidential report, sent to all chief constables, calls for seismic changes in management of the popular principle of police patrols on the streets and for a complete reappraisal of public expectations of the service. It reveals that many of the officers pounding the beat are inexperienced, badly briefed, and ill trained.

The report describes "working a beat" as "close to the bottom rung of the police status ladder."

The findings were sent out in the week John Major pledged at the Conservative Party conference to put another 5,000 police on the beat, and come after Tony Blair, the Labour leader, put a competing claim to increase community policing.

But both politicians can be reassured that, despite enormous management misgivings, the report concludes that "directed, intelligence-driven patrolling still has a key role to play."

The report looked set last night to spark a debate on the future of street patrols, with the Police Federation reacting strongly by saying it believed they were essential to public confidence, and that 80 per cent of the public believed *patrols were "very important"*.

The federation is likely to take issue with some of the commission's findings, which suggest that patrols do not have a big impact in stopping crime and encouraging public confidence.

The commission was shocked that a confidential draft of the report had been obtained by the Guardian before its main board had met to consider it. The report is not due to be published until next spring and a leak inquiry was launched last night.

The report appears to strip bare police claims of giving priority to putting officers on the beat. A damning paragraph says that while police forces say that 55 per cent of *their strength is "the front-line, public face of the police"*, in practice, only 5 per cent of police strength is out on patrol at any one time.

This means, says the report, that only 125 officers out of 2,500 will be on the streets. The report says that specialisation, the shift system, leave, training, sickness, and the need to spend time in the police station, all take officers off the street.

The report considers running of police control rooms, handling of 999 calls, shift patterns, management of patrols, and use of special constables. In all these areas, it finds examples of poor management, with vast differences in local practice.

In some areas, nearly one *in three calls to the police* control room were treated as emergencies, while at the other extreme, another force treated only one in 100 calls as an emergency.

The report paints an unflattering picture of how officers on patrol are briefed and debriefed. Briefings were found to be inadequately prepared, containing too many items, and rarely including details of crimes being investigated by the CID in the area. "Rooms used for briefings are often cluttered and noisy and prone to interruption."

Even more problematic is the absence in most forces of debriefing, says the report. Only 5 per cent of officers interviewed stated they were systematically debriefed by *their sergeants*.

The report says the main solution will involve educating the public not to expect the police to respond to every call and reorganising the police operation to ensure that it uses patrols intelligently.

It proposes a more thorough use of special constables to back up the full-time force, more tutoring, supervision and training for officers on patrol, and an intelligent use by the police control room in fielding calls.

The report also says that special constables, whose strength is being increased from 20,000 to 30,000, should be paid if they work eight hours or more a week.

It wants an investigation into introducing a 333 line service to prevent the 999 service being overloaded with calls. It says Britain is almost alone in not having a filter service to field calls which are not emergencies.

How police and public grew apart, page 3

Police report: main points

- Public dissatisfaction with low level of foot patrols.
- Officers operate in fire-fighting mode, rushing from one *incident to another*.
- Resources and demands are ill matched.
- Patrol work has low status thus few good officers stay in that role.
- Inappropriate supervision of patrol work.
- Officers do not make best use of non-incident time.
- Patrol work assessed by volume rather than results.

'I said we intended to intensify the fight against crime and I mean it. . . we have found the resources to put an extra 5,000 police officers on the beat'
John Major to Tory conference

'Even doubling or trebling the resources available for patrol would be unlikely to make a substantial impression. Effective police action requires specialisation of roles'
National Audit Commission

Battle for the White House: Republicans embrace war hero as only credible candidate with chance of beating Clinton

Gen Powell: Seen as saviour

Powell 'to run for president'

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

GENERAL Colin Powell is expected to launch an all-out bid to become the first black president of the United States next month with a formal declaration that he will seek the Republican party's nomination *to challenge Bill Clinton* for the White House in 1996.

Republican sources said yesterday that the Gulf war hero, former chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and now best-selling author, was set to make his move as early as November 11 — Veterans' Day.

Gen Powell's entry into the race would transform the US political landscape and give the Republicans a better-than-even chance of dashing Mr Clinton's increasingly confident re-election hopes, the sources said.

"If I had to bet today on one person for the Republican presidential nomination, I'd put my money on Colin Powell," said Bill Kristol, the top Republican strategist and now editor of the conservative Weekly Standard.

Gen Powell's anticipated candidacy — now regarded in Washington as a racing certainty — has dismayed the frontrunner, Senator Bob Dole, and other declared Republican candidates.

The party's upper echelons increasingly view Gen Powell as a saviour, and are convinced the retired general will declare before November 23.

A Powell bid to capture the Republican nomination would also damage severely a new attempt by Ross Perot, the Texan billionaire, to thrust a third-party candidate into the White House, the sources said. With a "political outsider" at the helm, Republicans say they hope to avoid a split in the anti-Clinton vote, which is what beat *George Bush in 1992*.

Driven by polls which show Gen Powell as the only man able to beat Mr Clinton, the party's key power-brokers have either openly endorsed the general or are quietly urging him to run.

Aides say Gen Powell has been emboldened by the runaway success of his autobiography — a record-breaking 1,550,000 copies of which have been printed in its first month — and the pop-star reception he received during his promotional campaign.

"The book tour has had a tremendous effect on him, with people coming down the line and telling him he ought to be president," said one of his closest advisors.

Gen Powell is now in "seclusion" with his family and aides, and said he will make an announcement no later than the Thanksgiving holiday at the end of November.

His son has told friends he is certain his father will run. Significantly, the Powell camp has put out "feelers" to

Turn to page 2, column 3

Leader comment, page 8
Letters, page 8

WHY DEPEND ON MYSTIC MEG TO PREDICT YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE?

Straighten out your life with careful financial planning from our experts. For further details call into your nearest branch, or phone us free on 0800 100 888 Monday to Friday 8.00am to 9.00pm or Saturday 8.00am to 4.00pm, quoting reference A349F.

ABBEY NATIONAL
The habit of a lifetime
W172

ABBEY NATIONAL PLC, WHICH IS REGULATED BY THE PERSONAL INVESTMENT AUTHORITY, ONLY SELLS ITS OWN LIFE ASSURANCE, PENSION AND UNIT TRUST PRODUCTS.
Abbey National, the Umbrella Couple symbol and The habit of a lifetime are trademarks of Abbey National plc, Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL, United Kingdom.

Gay rights priests win victory in synod election

Madeleine Bunting Religious Affairs Editor

PRIESTS who are prominent advocates of homosexual rights have topped the polls in the Southwark and London dioceses in elections for the Church of England's General Synod, as the first election results indicate a strong showing for the gay lobby.

The Rev Malcolm Johnson, the first member of the clergy to be elected to the House of Clergy on an openly gay ticket, urged action to eradicate the Church's "cruel homophobia" in a statement following his election yesterday.

Mr Johnson is joined in the synod by the Rev Jeffrey John, who stood for the first time in the neighbouring diocese of Southwark, and who endorsed same sex marriages in his election address. He is the author of a radical pamphlet calling for reforms on homosexuality.

Richard Kirker, of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCM), said last night: "Mr Johnson is by no means the first gay in synod, but he has the unique distinction of being the most honest and had made no secret of his homosexuality. It will be embarrassing to the Church that he has won more votes than anyone else in London."

The LGCM claims that nearly half of the clergy synod members elected in London and Southwark now actively support homosexual rights on issues such as the ordination of practising gays and gay marriage. It says that early results in other dioceses, such as Lichfield, also showed gains.

London and Southwark were among the earliest results for the five-year synod, the Church of England's governing body, with the rest expected during the next few days.

Other gains for the gay lobby include supporters such as Brian McHenry, who came top of the lay poll in Southwark and is tipped as a possible chair of the House of Laity, and the Archdeacon of Wandsworth, David Gerrard.

The gains for the gay lobby will increase tension within the Church over this issue, which many see as potentially more divisive than the ordination of women. Mr Kirker said: "This synod is going to have to deal with this issue. More candidates made positive commitments to an informed discussion on sexuality in this election than ever before. There has been a lot of prevarication but momentum is now building up."

Reform, the evangelical grouping in the synod which is opposed to homosexuality, said the strengthening of the gay lobby would bring the matter to a head.

Philip Hacking, its chairman, said: "The bishops can't duck this." He urged the Church to sack priests who are practising homosexuals.

Mr Johnson, a synod member since 1985, has preferred to keep a low profile over his homosexuality. The 59-year-old priest became known for his work with the homeless in Aldgate, east London, but for the past three years has been Master of the Royal Foundation of St Katherine, a church conference and retreat centre.

Dr John, a former dean of Magdalen College, Oxford, and now a vicar in south London, was unavailable for comment yesterday because he is on a pilgrimage.

Inside

News 2
Letters 8
Comment 9
Obituaries 10
Financial news 11

G2

Portrait 4
Inside story 7
Arts 8
Education 10
Health 12
Quick crossword 15
Cartoons 15
Radio 16
Television 16
Weather 16

43
9 770261 307323

Sketch

Helpful hints for hothouse plants

Simon Hoggart

ANOTHER *bad day for* the Labour front bench. Harriet Harman, newly appointed health spokesperson, received a mini-mauling when she attacked the Government over last week's pill warning.

It was not a particularly contentious issue, she was not especially aggressive, and Mr Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, is less of a pit bull than a Jack Russell: playful, frisky, only inclined to give a nip as a last resort.

But the barking and the *yelping from the Tory back* benches is a serious warning. It's off-putting and oppressive and, I would guess, even a little frightening for the more sensitive seedlings in Labour's nursery.

It certainly does wonders for Tory morale, and leaves the Labour benches looking morose and folorn.

It's pretty clear that from now on few of Labour's shadows will be allowed to get away with anything, certainly not with making a speech in relative calm. So they had better learn to cope. As Jack Straw found on Thursday, this can make the difference between a triumph and humiliation. Here, free of charge, is my advice.

(People might ask if I could do any better. Of course I couldn't. I am in the position of those fat, moustachioed men with ridiculous sunglasses who coach the 14-year-old girls at Wimbledon.)

First, don't signal your punches. Don't announce on the Today programme that you are about to bring the Government down unless you have truly sensational evidence. If you have the equivalent of Dreyfus's *bordereau*, or possess documentary proof that the minister has been embezzling from the Lottery in order to flee to Rio with his catamite, then you can adopt a tone of portentous solemnity.

If all you have is an ambiguous, leaked civil service minute, you need to gear your outrage down. Otherwise you look stupid.

Which links up with my second point: use humour. It's not difficult, since the House of Commons will laugh at almost anything. It's also hard to bully someone who's making you laugh.

What Mr Straw should have done was pile together all the *evidence* that Michael Howard obsessively tinkered with the prison service, and let it dribble out piece by piece — the while protesting sarcastically that of course the Home Secretary would never dream of interfering with operational matters. The comic effect would be heightened by the understatement.

Thirdly, take time to think about the interventions you're certain to get. For instance, Jack Straw was thrown when Bernard Jenkin put the simple query: "Do you think *the Director General of the* Prison Service should have been dismissed?"

It was an entirely predictable question, yet Straw fudged and flannelled, muttering that the issue was not precisely the one before the House. The Tories booed and bellowed and jeered.

Instead he should have hurled it back, instantly. (Questions which demand a yes or no answer, even unfair ones, must immediately be answered "yes" or "no", and not with blather. The qualifications can come later.)

In this case, he could have shouted: "Of course I don't think he should have been fired — because *I* would never have appointed him in the first place!"

It's not dazzling, but it works. Debate is like judo; you have to redirect your opponent's best moves against him.

Finally, be unexpected. Straw's call for Howard's resignation was wearisomely predictable.

Why not end by saying you *don't* want him to resign? Say that if he were to quit, he'd only be replaced by another incompetent, dogmatic time-server?

The election campaign is well under way. It's going to be filthy. Labour had better face that fact, otherwise they will look like Violet Elizabeth Bott sniffling at the Outlaws.

Allies bicker over peacekeeping commitment and demand US pays debt to cash-strapped world body

Major claims UN crown

Martin Walker in New York

BRITAIN and France both demanded that their American ally pay its debts to a reformed United Nations yesterday, agreed on the need for an enlarged Security Council, and then clashed over which of them was the leading provider of peacekeepers.

"The United Kingdom is the largest contributor of troops to UN peacekeeping operations — British forces are serving in blue berets from Angola to Georgia, with over 8,000 in Bosnia alone," boasted the Prime Minister, John Major, in his claim to be "a candid friend" of the UN.

"France has confidence in the UN, and is therefore engaged," said the French president, Jacques Chirac. "France has always been in the front rank of the search for peaceful solutions to the crises of our *time — from Cambodia to Bosnia*, she has become the first contributor of troops to the United Nations."

Neither speech won much applause from the UN's 50th anniversary general assembly yesterday. The audience was irritated that France insisted on continuing its nuclear-test programme in the South Pacific, and that Mr Major lectured them over housekeeping just like Margaret Thatcher used to.

"A UN that shows its worth to the taxpayer in all our countries, for it is they who pay the subscriptions," was what Mr Major wanted. He went on to complain of waste, mismanagement, too much bureaucracy and "the world's highest paper mountain".

Mr Major said: "Inaction is no longer an option. The threat to the future of the UN will not come from change. It will come from inertia." He endorsed the secretary general's call for an extraordinary meeting next year to deal with the UN's cash crisis.

"I dare say some of these points are controversial," Mr Major said. If so, few in the half-empty chamber were taking much offence. The Prime Minister spoke in generalities, of a Security Council that "should be enlarged" — but he did not say with whom.

John Major and Argentinian leader Carlos Menem seek to overcome conflicts over the Falklands with a meeting in New York PHOTOGRAPH: JIM BOURG

By contrast, Mr Chirac said firmly that Japan and Germany should be brought in, "and some great states of the South".

At least Mr Major and President Chirac — representing two of the five countries with the right to a veto at the Security Council — had showed up. For a region that claims to be the world's richest trading bloc, Europe put on an undistinguished show. Germany's chancellor and Italy's president did not even turn up.

For Mr Major and President Chirac, the real significance of the UN assembly was what took place outside.

For Mr Chirac, the dogs that refused to bark in the night were the leaders of Japan and Algeria — who decided not to meet him.

For Mr Major, there was no business like oil business. His meetings with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan were all oil-related. And so was his long-awaited meeting with Argentina's president, Carlos Menem, who yesterday hailed the agreement to share oil-exploitation rights around the Falklands, and added "the question of sovereignty of the Malvinas has been placed under an umbrella".

Mr Menem told reporters: "Argentina and Britain shall be showing an example to the world that it is only through peaceful negotiations that solutions can be reached that are acceptable to everyone."

Much of the air went out of the UN meeting with the departure of the US president, Bill Clinton, and Russia's president, Boris Yeltsin, for their own private superpower summit. As the two biggest debtors to the UN, they missed a chorus of complaints about their arrears. The US owes £800 million, and the Russians more than £300 million.

"It is not sustainable for member states to enjoy representation without taxation," complained Mr Major, but named no names.

Mr Chirac was more blunt: "The temptation of disengagement threatens the very existence of the UN. It is not acceptable that many countries, most notably the biggest of all, let the debts mount up."

The blandest speech of all came on behalf of the European Union, delivered by the Spanish prime minister, Felipe González, current European Council president.

"The European Union hopes that all states, large and small, will contribute through full, punctual and unconditional fulfilment of their financial obligations," thundered the voice of Europe. And just to settle the Anglo-French squabble over who provided more peacekeepers, Mr González said that Europe did.

Russia drawn in to Bosnia's peace plans, page 6

First night

Teenage soap is nothing but froth

Stuart Jeffries

Hollyoaks
Channel 4

BRITISH television used to answer the bronzed bodies and white teeth of Australian and American soap operas with bronzed teeth and white bodies. Thanks to Phil Redmond, all that has changed. Hollyoaks isn't so much our first teen soap as a salute to British dentistry. Gone are the days when the good-time hopes of programme makers would founder on the yellowing stumps of a cast of verité trolls. Now we have a team of gorgeous actors who can smile without shame throughout each half-hour episode. And they do — heaven knows why, but they do.

Redmond, who devised Hollyoaks, deserves credit for his nerve: he has attempted to capitalise on the huge success among teenage Britons of Home and Away and Neighbours by bringing those cocktails of good looks and soft-focus story lines to Cheshire.

Real teenage life, even in suburban Chester, may not be as free from serious conflict and acne as Hollyoaks, but that is no reason to judge a programme harshly. Redmond's real error is not in mistaking what British teenagers are really like, but in what teenage viewers really like. Hollyoaks is as hopeless as a road movie set on the M50 — a foreign genre which it is misguided to import.

Teenagers enjoy Australian soaps and Beverly Hills 90210 partly because they are wafted somewhere exotic and sunny, but viewers of all ages demand something different from home-grown television. Think of EastEnders, the ultimate feelgood British soap. You can feel good watching the endless round of Albert Square woe, because you can take pleasure in other people's misfortune: at least you don't have Michelle Fowler's sour mush, Phil Mitchell's consonant-free diction, or the cuckold's horns of Ian Beale.

There was at least some pleasure to be taken in other people's misfortune in Hollyoaks. It was the pleasure of beautiful people sounding stupid, like Marky Mark and Kate Moss debating Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. The US sitcom Friends used to infuriate because its characters had it all — looks, clothes, sharp one-liners. In Hollyoaks, the characters have looks, clothes, and excruciating dialogue, written by Redmond.

Natasha's dad (played by Alvin Stardust) asked what time she and her mate would return from a party. Natasha: "Before dawn. Right Dawn?" Dawn: "Does that mean you walk in before me?" What is the point of script conferences if this stuff gets through?

In last Friday's Brookside, Redmond's sterling Scouse soap, there was a shameless plug for Hollyoaks when teenage Rachel Jordache told crusty David Crosby that even he would enjoy it. This was incestuous advertising (a compliment returned by two Hollyoaks characters talking fondly about "Brookie"), but also a pre-emptive strike against criticism: if you don't dig the show, daddio, then you're more square than Brookside's squarest character. But even in my televisually challenged teens, we were never stupid enough to have found Hollyoaks anything but inept.

DNA tests 'could flush out killer'

John Mullin and Tim Radford

DETECTIVES in Warwickshire are to embark on mass DNA *screening in an effort to flush* out the killer of schoolgirl Naomi Smith. They want to take samples from 800 young men around Nuneaton.

Although they hope to find a match to a fragment taken from the murder scene, police admit their best chance might be in prompting the killer to panic. They believe he is local, and might now try to leave the area.

There are no plans to use new powers to force individuals to give mouth swabs or a lock of hair, but that might be re-examined after the *initial* testing. One officer said: "We will obviously be extremely interested in anyone who persistently declines our invitation to have a swab taken at their home."

Naomi, aged 15, was sexually assaulted and savagely beaten when she went to post a letter for her mother one night last month. Her father found her beneath a climbing frame in a nearby children's playground. Her throat had been cut.

Naomi Smith: killed while posting letter for mother

Warwickshire Police, with a £6 million deficit, denied yesterday it had delayed the screening programme until it had secured funds. Each test is thought to cost about £45.

It took almost six weeks for the forensic scientists to come up with a usable reading from the fragment that samples will be tested against.

The technique to be used is amplification, the cheapest. A tiny sample is photocopied in the laboratory, and delivers a pattern which might be repeated in one in 20,000 of the population. Police know it is insufficient on its own to secure a conviction. But it is a useful pointer, and could help them concentrate their energies on a paritcular suspect.

The method was first used in 1985 to settle an immigration dispute about the identity of a child. In 1984, Professor Alec Jeffreys, of the University of Leicester, had realised that there were regions of the human chromosome that showed remarkable variability, and devised a way of using these lengths of DNA to identify an individual. Prof Jeffreys has repeatedly stressed that DNA fingerprinting is an additional tool for the police, rather than clinching evidence.

The chance of two unrelated people showing the same pattern of DNA is about one in a billion, and lawyers in the United States and in Britain have challenged DNA evidence based on probabilities. Challenges were made in the O. J. Simpson case.

Detectives will initially focus on 800 young men aged 15 to 28. They have consulted Catchem, the national database on sex crimes and killings of girls and young women, to come up with an offender profile.

There is no guarantee of success. Detectives in south Wales decided on mass screening to track the killer of Claire Hood, aged 15, who was raped and battered in St Mellons, Cardiff. The murderer is still at large, six months after testing began.

But Detective Superintendent Tony Bayliss, leading the investigation into Naomi's murder, said: "It is now a question of when and not if we catch this offender ... This testing may provoke some unusual behaviour, someone leaving the area unexpectedly. We will be watching for that."

More than 1,800 people have been interviewed, with statements taken from 441 people, and police believe the killer must have known Naomi or the area very well.

White House anxiety as bandwagon gains momentum

Continued from page 1

Newt Gingrich, the speaker of the House of Representatives, who has placed his own presidential aspirations on hold awaiting a decision. Mr Gingrich is in frequent contact with Ken Duberstein, the unofficial strategist of Mr Powell's shadow campaign.

The widening of America's racial divide — with the acquittal of O.J. Simpson and last week's Million Man March on Washington — has *only increased the appetite* for Gen Powell, who many believe could act as a "racial healer".

Republican strategists also argue that his candidacy would broaden the party's appeal beyond its current white suburban base.

Insiders say that, as the party of Abraham Lincoln, it is appropriate that the Republicans should be first to choose a black nominee.

Jack Kemp, himself a 1988 presidential candidate with a large following in the Republican party, has lavished praise on Gen Powell, who gained fame during the Gulf operation, Desert Storm.

"He is a leader," Mr Kemp *said. "He transcends* the parties. He is a Republican on almost every issue."

Yesterday the general's boss, the former defence secretary Richard Cheney, said: "Colin Powell has the qualities I like to see in a president. I am a big fan."

Crucially, the Bronx-born soldier has won the tentative endorsement of the conservative talk-show host Rush Limbaugh.

A Powell candidacy would all but destroy the flagging hopes of Mr Dole, who received a small boost yesterday with the endorsement of California's governor, Pete Wilson. But the endorsement is likely to carry little weight.

Mr Dole remains under fire from diehard conservatives, led by Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington. Last week she called Mr Dole a "tired old man", promoting Gen Powell's candidacy instead.

"A Powell run is like a thermo-nuclear explosion — it just sucks out all the oxygen from the rest of us," said an aide to the Republican senator Phil Gramm, Mr Dole's nearest rival.

White House sources admit to deep anxiety at the prospect of facing Gen Powell in 1996. Polls show Mr Clinton 15 per cent behind the general in a straight contest. He beats Mr Dole and every other Republican by at least 9 per cent.

Mr Clinton made his first gaffe in months last week, admitting to a Texas audience that his 1993 budget had raised taxes "too much" — even though at the time he staked his presidency on the move.

Pill warning delay prompts review of GP alert systems

Rebecca Smithers and Ian Traynor

THE Government yesterday agreed to review the way that important health information is relayed to doctors, as it defended its handling of the steps it took last week to warn women of the risk of some types of contraceptive pill.

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, bowed to opposition pressure to make a Commons statement, and pledged: "If there are lessons to be learned, we shall of course learn them."

The Government has been criticised by GPs, the Opposition and many women since its warning last Thursday that women on seven named brands of the pill were twice as likely as those on other types to suffer deep vein thrombosis. Helplines were inundated with calls.

The wave of anxiety swept Germany yesterday and two of the companies at the centre of the alert set up helplines. "Hundreds of women have been calling since we put in the phone lines today," said a spokesman for the Munich-based subsidiary of the Dutch company Organon, manufacturer of two of the seven listed drugs that Germany is considering banning.

The Government's review was welcomed by the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing.

Harriet Harman, the new shadow health secretary, attacked the "complacent and incompetent way" the Government had handled the announcement and said it had panicked more than 1 million women, while their GPS had been left in the dark.

"GPs are right to be angry that they had to rely for medical advice on the Guardian and the BBC Nine O'Clock News."

Mr Dorrell conceded that not every GP had known "at the ideal moment". "I recognise that after any incident of this kind we need to ensure that the arrangements are reviewed to learn any lessons available," he said.

But he played down the level of panic, claiming the helpline had received fewer than 3,000 phone calls over the weekend.

In response to his inquiries about the level of concern, 'I was told, frankly, that they were a great deal more sensible and a great deal more calm than those commentating on the subject".

Mr Dorrell said media inquiries on Thursday morning forced the Medicines Control Agency to bring forward the public announcement to midday "to ensure that a properly balanced message was immediately made available.

"The Government has a duty to evaluate information on the safety of medicines as soon as it is available and to ensure that doctors and their patients are in possession of the information necessary to allow them to make informed choices about their health.

"

The Government uses a system called Link for urgent communications from the Department of Health, which includes an "immediate" category designed to reach doctors within six hours, and "urgent", to reach them on the next working day. Miss Harman noted that the urgent method, used in this case, did not reach many doctors for two working days.

Letters, page 8

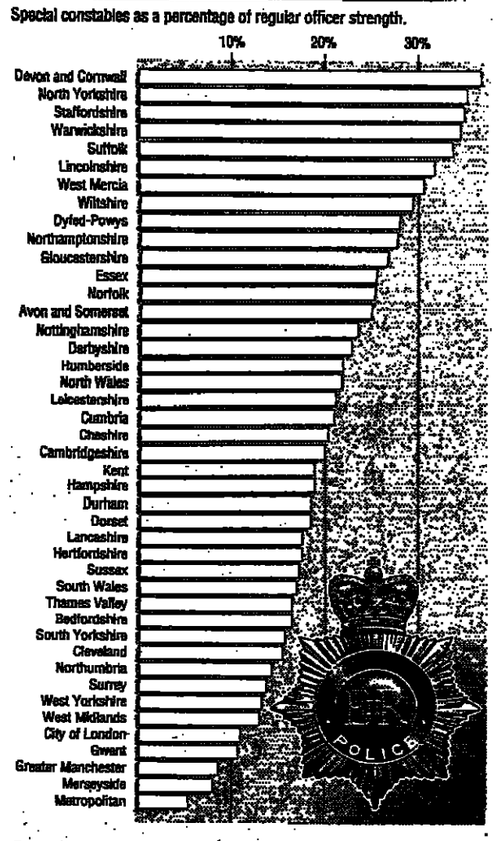
THE DAWN CHORUS ON RADIO 3.

NOW RADIO 3 STARTS THE DAY ONE HOUR EARLIER. JOIN ANDREW McGREGOR AND THE ON AIR TEAM FROM 6AM. MONDAY TO FRIDAY.

3 RADIO 3 90-93 FM

On patrol

Special constables as a percentage of regular officer strength.

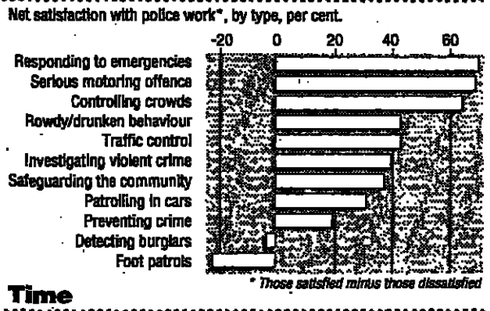


An average British city has:

- 770 miles of road
- 1,400 miles of pavement
- 844 acres of parks and open spaces
- 182,000 people
- 74,500 houses
- 230 pubs
- 95 schools
- and no more than 10 officers on patrol at any one time.

Satisfaction

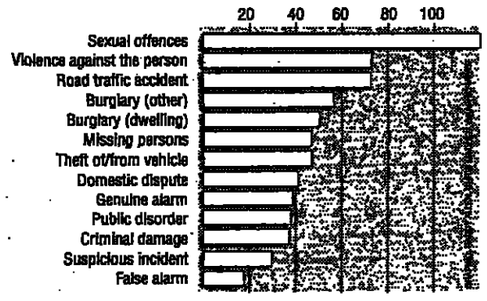
Net satisfaction with police work*, by type, per cent.



* Those satisfied minus those dissatisfied

Time

Time taken to deal with incidents, minutes. Average all incidents: 38 mins.



'Even trebling officers available for patrol' will not solve the problem

David Hencke on an exhaustive analysis

Back to basics . . . The report stresses personal contact between the beat officer and the public PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

How police and public grew apart

BRITAIN'S police provide an inefficiently run patrol service to a dissatisfied public, which in turn has unrealistic expectations of the force, according to the Audit Commission's report.

The 98-page report traces the problem back to the 1960s, when constables were equipped with personal radios and patrol cars, thus losing personal touch with their beat.

"The resulting loss of personal contact with the public, and the decline of a visible police presence walking the streets, contributed to a deterioration in what was a very positive relationship between the police and the communities they served. Since the early 1980s, forces have been making concerted efforts to re-establish these community links, with varying degrees of success," says the report.

It contrasts claims that some 60 per cent of police resources — £4 billion — is allocated to operational patrol with the fact that only 5 per cent of police strength is out on patrol at any one time.

It says there are four main reasons why the police cannot fulfil the public's expectations:

☐ These expectations are not wholly realistic;

☐ *Demand for police services* has risen at a faster rate than police resources, particularly personnel, have increased, and forces have struggled to bridge the ensuing gap;

☐ Police are not managing existing demand efficiently, and officers spend too much time rushing between incidents;

☐ What time there is for patrols is often poorly targeted and relatively unproductive.

Police patrol and public expectations:

The report says that to meet public expectations of having more officers on the beat would not necesarily clear up crime. An analysis shows that in an average British town of 182,000 people at any one time only 10 officers would be on the beat.

"Each beat is likely to contain several thousand houses and businesses, whose occupants all want to see the officer passing by and hundreds of miles of pavements. Even doubling or trebling the resources available for patrol would be unlikely to make a substantial impression. Effective police action against crime requires specialisation of roles — detectives, intelligence officers, scientific support and so on. Restoring all of these officers to patrol duties would wreak havoc on crime strategy and quickly reduce public confidence in the police."

Problem of meeting rising demand:

The report says police strength is up 8 per cent since 1980 but demand on police work has surged. In 1980 each police officer was handling 17 999 calls a year; by 1994 this had risen to 44, an increase of 160 per cent. If recent trends continue, by 2010 "police can expect calls for service — crimes, reports of suspicious incidents, alarms and requests for help — to have risen 60 per cent to 285 a year.

The report says the police need to address inefficiencies in control room operations, mismatches between workload patterns and shift systems, and poor management of the special constabulary to counter these problems.

Poor supervision and rigid shift working all add to the problem. "Each one per cent of calls to which officers are dispatched unnecessarily absorbs in total 22,500 working days, at a financial opportunity cost of £4.6 million a year." Bad shift working left one centre with more officers available for patrol at 5 am than any other time of the day.

Special constables were badly managed and by contributing only four hours a week are regarded as not suitable to handle serious assignments.

Targeting of patrol work:

Patrol work lacks clear objectives, briefings to officers on shifts are variable in quality and debriefings are rare; supervision is weak; patrol officers are poorly served by information and officers are judged by the volume of activity rather than its efficacy.

The report finds that patrols are taken by the most junior officers — in one force entirely by probationers.

Conclusions:

"The police need to take steps to break out of the reactive mode that is stifling their ability to provide more community-based, proactive patrols. Unless this approach becomes ingrained as everyday practice, it will wither on the vine in the face of constant pressure."

Plans include:

Introducing a 333 line — rather than relying on 999 line to cover all police complaints — thus allowing calls to be weeded out, so as to prevent the police being overwhelmed.

Paying for special constables who are prepared to spend longer hours on duty.

Reorganisation of control rooms, more tutoring of police on the beat, encouraging higher grade officers to work on the beat.

Audit Commision Study: Effective Police Control, Draft Report. Final report to be published next spring

Commission's remit

THE Audit Commission is an independent body, funded by local government and NHS Trusts, set up in 1983 to recommend the best value for money in public services.

It also supervises the district audit services.

Its top official is Andrew Foster, the Controller, who is a former director of social services and senior Department of Health official.

Recent reports have included one on GP funding, which recommended the use of more generic medicines; another on the management of the CID by police authorities; one on funding the fire service to encourage more fire prevention; and one on how to improve local authority delivery of services by setting up performance league tables.

The commission also legally checked the initial district audit report on alleged gerrymandering by Dame Shirley Porter, the former leader of Westminster council.

Asda faces legal threat

Lisa Buckingham

BIG drug companies have threatened an injunction against Asda to prevent it cutting the price of over-the-counter medicines.

The drug manufacturers are seeking to defend resale price maintenance, which sets minimum prices for some pharmaceutical products, in the face of the price cutting challenge threatened by Asda eight days ago.

Asda yesterday told Procter & Gamble, SmithKline Beecham, Warner Wellcome and Reckitt & Colman that it had not yet discounted any of their products. The company also asked for a meeting to prevent legal action.

The legal threat from four of Britain's five largest drugs companies comes three days after the Office of Fair Trading announced its intention to review price fixing on medicaments. The OFT director general, John Bridgeman, declared that "in general" resale price maintenance gives consumers a bad deal.

Supporters argue that without price support local chemists will go out of business, and the public could be tempted to buy unwanted and potentially dangerous products.

The drugs row covers over-the-counter products such as analgesics, antiseptic creams and indigestion remedies. Despite a considerable public relations fanfare, Asda has restricted its price cutting to a few branded vitamin preparations and food supplements. The OFT will decide whether these can be considered medicaments at all.

Hanson and Roche, which manufacture vitamin preparations such as Seven Seas and Sanatogen with which Asda launched its price cutting assault, are not among the companies threatening to issue the injunction.

Other supermarkets groups have, so far, not followed Asda's price cutting lead, and Boots has said it will fiercely oppose the end of resale price maintenance.

● The shadow employment secretary, Michael Meacher, yesterday accused Asda of "reneging" on promises to protect the rights of its Sunday workers by offering new staff working on Sundays a lower rate of pay than others. Asda says it is simply providing extra staff with the opportunity of earning overtime.

Ministers row over lottery cash

David Brindle and Michael White

A STRUGGLE for control of the National Lottery Charities Board is raging in Whitehall, going to the heart of the controversy over the board's grant-making.

As a row rumbled on over the alleged "political correctness" of the board's first £40 million of grants announced yesterday, it emerged that Virginia Bottomley, National Heritage Secretary, wants to wrest the board from the grip of the Home Office.

She is known to favour a more populist line on the kind of charities which should receive grants.

David Mellor, a former national heritage secretary, yesterday called for the Department of National Heritage to take over the board, which, he said was being run by the Home Office "like a progressive London council". It was failing to compensate bigger charities for losses of income caused by the lottery.

The board is the only one of the lottery's five boards which does not come under national heritage. The Home Office has traditionally overseen the charity sector. However, a heritage department official said: "Since the heritage department has the capital invested in the lottery and gets the flak if things go wrong, it should also have the responsibility."

The grants announcement yesterday was undermined by tabloid Sunday newspapers which published selective leaks of successful applicants.

When details emerged, it became plain that fewer than 1 per cent of grants were going to refugee groups such as the Eritrean Advice and Information Centre, in London, which has received £91,000 and was highlighted in the press.

But critics of the board's awards seized on the fact that the biggest grant, more than £666,000, is going to the Strathclyde Poverty Alliance to help "community activists to combat poverty".

David Sieff, charities board chairman, said that advance lists of award recipients had been given at the end of last week to the Home Office and the heritage department.

Dominic Byrne, head of communications for Actionaid, an overseas aid charity, said: "The secretary of state appears to be close to interfering with the operational duties of the charities board. Her speed to link herself with tabloid criticisms raises doubts about whether politicians will respect the independence of the board."

Labour has announced the creation of an independent advisory group on lottery gifts. Dr Jack Cunningham, the new shadow national heritage secretary, said: "I want to look at ways in which the lottery players themselves can have their views taken into account."

French police hunt the 'granny from hell' with an appetite for luxury

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

FRENCH police are hunting for a 75-year-old "devilish granny" who, for more than 50 years, has lived in the country's top hotels and eaten in its most expensive restaurants without ever paying the bill.

Armed with two knitting needles and three balls of wool, Henriette Raes, a confidence trickster, lives by the maxim of *"l'addition, non merci"*.

She has just been sentenced *in absentia* to three years in jail after escaping from custody. But the public prosecutor presiding at Quimper, Britanny, said Miss Raes's conviction — her 32nd since 1946 — would make no difference.

"There is no point in dreaming," Bruno Gestermann told the court. "She is not going to mellow or change her way of life."

Miss Raes, of no fixed abode, is said by police to fit the description of "an old English lady" — white-haired and likely to be wearing a floral-print dress and round spectacles.

Her adventures have been likened to those of Tatie Danielle, the title-role heroine of a 1990 film directed by Etienne Chatiliez. The black comedy features a woman aged 80 who moves in with her nephew's family. Exploiting foibles of old age, such as incontinence, she keeps the family awake at night by continually flushing the lavatory.

Miss Raes was last seen by police in September 1992 when she was arrested after checking out of the Michelin-listed Hôtel de Bretagne in Douarnenez, leaving an unpaid bill of 80,000 Francs (£10,000).

A spokesman for the hotel said yesterday: "She stayed for seven days. We were totally taken in. She said she was from Lourdes and we felt she must be a deeply holy person because she talked about miracles all the time."

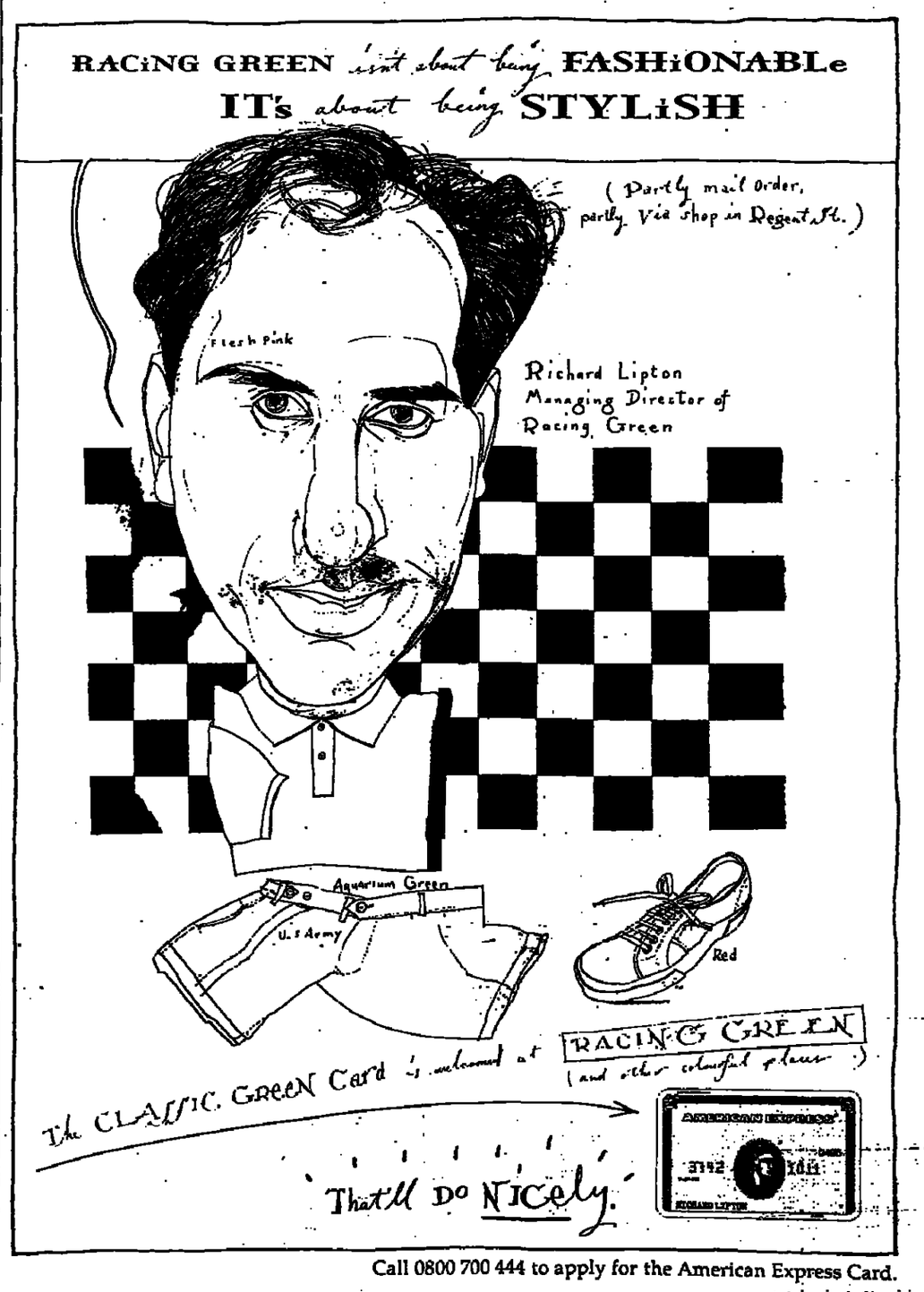
Police found a knitting kit in her room, which they returned to her before she escaped from custody.

Mr Gestermann said Miss Raes began her anarchistic adventures at the age of 20 and has been on the move ever since. He said she is one of two "devilish grannies" who tour France's top establishments. "They are born three years apart and, curiously, they look alike."

It is possible — despite all Richard Branson's whinges — to make the case that Camelot has done a remarkable job. Its profits are likely to be remarkably modest given the amounts of money generated. Far from being a collection of get-rich-quick merchants with friends in high places Camelot almost certainly was the best qualified.

Alex Brummer defends the lottery operator

Page 9



Call 0800 700 444 to apply for the American Express Card.

Ministry admits evidence can no longer be ignored

Poor suffer more illness than rich

Chris Mihill
Medical Correspondent

POOR people are more likely to suffer ill health than the rich, and more should be done to reduce health inequalities between social classes, the Department of Health conceded yesterday.

A report from the department said further research was needed to clarify the causes of variations in health and how to reduce them. The department yesterday pledged £2.4 million to fund such studies.

The report, chaired by Jeremy Metters, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, was set up last year as part of the Government's Health of the Nation targets, but the working party was given a narrow remit of assessing what the department and the NHS could do, rather than addressing wider social questions of poverty eradication.

The report concluded: "Systematic variations in mortality rates between different groups of the population have consistently been observed in the UK and elsewhere. Within the UK there are marked differences by occupational class, sex, region, and ethnicity, in life expectancy, healthy life expectancy, and incidence of and survival from a range of diseases. Everyone should have the opportunity to attain their full potential for health. Variations indicate the extent of preventable ill health and premature death. An important way of achieving the Health of the Nation targets is to improve the health of the least healthy groups closer to the levels attained by the most healthy groups."

The report stated: "In the last 20 years an extensive research literature has been published which has shown continuing, and in some cases increasing, differentials in mortality and morbidity rates rates between socioeconomic groups, men and women, regions of the country, and ethnic groups."

The report said that life expectancy at birth was seven years higher in social class one (professional) than social class five (manual). Children in social class five were four times more likely to suffer accidental death than their peers in social class one. Of 66 major causes of death in men, 62 were more common in social classes four and five combined than in other social classes. Of 70 major causes of death in women, 64 were more common in women married to men in social classes four and five.

The report said that although women in social class one had 1.5 times the incidence of breast cancer as women in social class five, most deaths occurred among the poorer women.

The report warned that lifestyle or behaviour could not solely account for differences between classes. "Risk factors such as smoking, drinking, and diet only explain a third of the social class gradient in coronary heart disease mortality and morbidity."

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, yesterday acknowledged the truth of the findings, although he added that they applied across the developed world. Citing a decline in babies dying in their first year in the lowest social groups, he said: "It is important to remember that overall, health is improving in all regions of the country and across all social groups.

"The NHS is better placed than ever to tackle health variations. Health authorities now concentrate on assessing the health needs of local people and planning and purchasing services to meet those needs. Needs assessment requires an understanding of health variations between different groups in society, and in local populations, to inform priority setting by health authorities."

Beak show . . . This lappet-faced vulture at London Zoo can be adopted for £300, as part of National Animal Adoption Week PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN

Northern GPs' funds loss

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

FAMILY doctor services in the north of England may be receiving almost a fifth too little funding for local needs, while those in the south may be receiving up to a fifth too much, research today suggests.

Redistributing primary healthcare resources on the basis of relative needs would switch tens of millions of pounds northwards from the area below a line from Bristol to the Wash, according to health economists.

Although funding for hospital and community health services has been varied by "weighted capitation" — or population profile — since the late 1970s, funding for family health services has not.

Karen Bloor, research fellow at the centre for health economics at York university, and Alan Maynard, the centre's director, say this militates against equity.

For illustrative purposes, they have applied several alternative models of weighted capitation to the funding of the 14 former English health regions.

By one method, taking the age profiles of regional populations and adjusting resources according to average health expenditure by age group, they show that the South-western region would have lost 14 per cent of its 1990/91 funding, while the Northern region would have gained 9.6 per cent.

Varying resources by average use of health services by age group produces similar results and would have led to the loss of more than 300 GPs in both South-western and North-west Thames, while North-western would have gained 371 and Northern 218.

Making additional allowance for local unemployment, owner-occupation, numbers of elderly people living alone and incidence of limiting long-term illness, the researchers show that Oxford would have lost as much as 18.3 per cent of its funding (£49.7 million), while Northern would have gained 17.4 per cent (£62.4 million).

The researchers conclude: "An agreed national contract for primary care, let by competitive tender and with clear performance targets, might ensure that a more equally-distributed primary care budget was used more efficiently for patients' benefit."

Equity in Primary Care; CHE, York university, York YO1 5DD; £5.

McAvoy joins poll fight

John Carvel
Education Editor

DOUG McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, last night raised the stakes in his battle with the left wing by disclosing confidential voting records to spoil the chances of his critics in elections for the top positions in the union.

He released details of an executive meeting last week which agreed to consult the 195,000 members on a proposed change in the union rulebook, which he said would switch power from "extremists" at thinly-attended branch meetings to the mass of ordinary members through postal ballots.

"The extreme left on the union's executive sought to prevent the consultation exercise. They preferred to confine debate on the proposals to the executive and local branches. They were defeated 25 votes to 14," the union said in a statement authorised by Mr McAvoy which broke the rule that voting should remain confidential.

"The split in the executive is reflected among the candidates in the union's elections for national office starting this week," the statement continued. It named Ian Murch and Christine Blower — two leftwingers standing for the posts of treasurer and vice-president — as members of the anti-McAvoy minority which opposed consultation.

As a full-time employee of the union, Mr McAvoy would normally be expected to stay clear of the campaign for the top elected positions. NUT vice-presidents move on automatically to become the president, to whom Mr McAvoy is answerable.

His intervention provoked anger on the left of the executive. Bernard Regan, an inner London member, said it was "unprecedented and unwarranted interference in the democratic processes of the union by the official machinery".

The proposal being put to the membership in a ballot starting this week would give all members a direct say in nominating candidates for national office, determining the annual conference agenda, endorsing conference decisions and agreeing any changes in union rules.

Although the ballot has no more than consultative status, Mr McAvoy is planning to use the expected reformist majority to put pressure on his leftwing opponents.

News in brief

Toxic leak firm fined

The Belfast aerospace company Shorts was fined £4,000 by Belfast magistrates yesterday over a leak of toxic gases in August last year which killed one worker and left 34 others needing hospital treatment. Eddie Arnold, aged 31, from Newtownards, Co Down, died after being in a coma for a year.

Papers under fire

Customs is claiming 37.5 per cent duty on the proceeds from the premium phone lines used by readers taking part in newspaper fantasy games, says the Legal Times. The move could cost the industry £1 million.

Scientist honoured

The Queen has appointed Nobel prize-winning moleculnr biologist Sir Aaron Klug, aged 79, to be a member of the Order of Merit. He won the prize for Chemistry in 1982.

Stations to merge

BBC Thames Valley Radio is to replace BBC Radio Oxford and BBC Radio Berkshire, the corporation announced yesterday.

Fight for life

Surgeons at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, in Reading, are "extremely concerned" about whether William Kydd, aged 58, the Princess of Wales's uncle, will survive after his horseriding accident on Sunday.

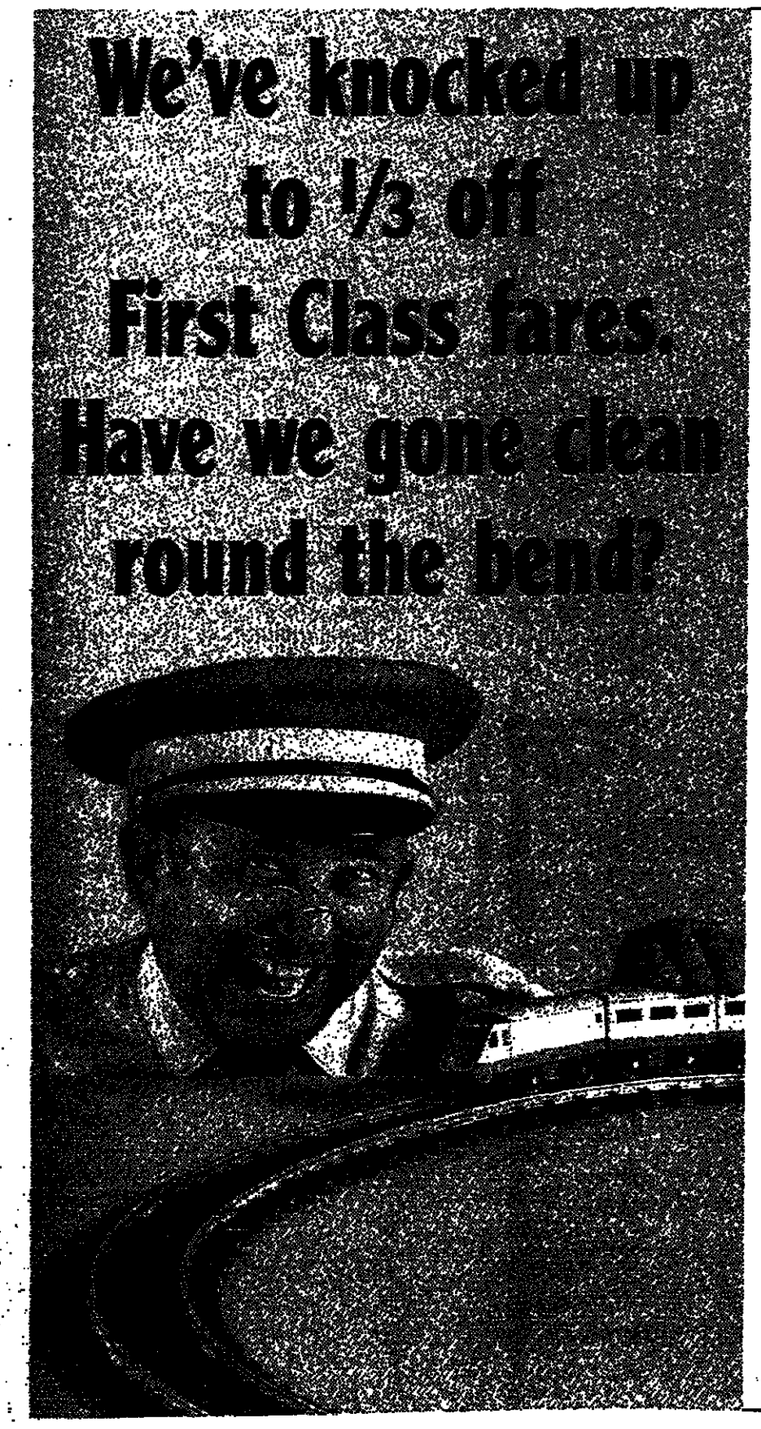
Warm front

This month looks set to be the warmest since records began. The mild weather has caused problems for water companies, with five still operating hosepipe bans.

Poppy relaunch

The Royal British Legion relaunched red car poppies yesterday after a 13-year absence.

We've knocked up to 1/3 off First Class fares. Have we gone clean round the bend?



1ST ADVANCE

Up to 1/3 off First Class rail travel on selected CrossCountry routes if you book by 2 o'clock the previous afternoon.

Is the world going topsy turvey? Or are we just going mad? Because with First Advance you really can get up to 1/3 off the cost of First Class return travel on selected routes over 50 miles on the CrossCountry network.*

To take advantage of this craziness, all you have to do is book your ticket by 2 o'clock the day before you want to travel.

First Advance can be booked at any staffed station, Rail Appointed Travel Agent, or your tickets can be delivered to your door by calling 0990 136 107 and quoting your credit, debit or charge card details allowing 7 days for delivery.

So move up to First Class for less.

*Please check availability at time of booking.

YOU'D BE LOCO NOT TO

INTERCITY CrossCountry

Midland Bank plc is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and only advises on its own life assurance, pensions and unit trusts. AU/85

MIDLAND

When will your company stop paying you if you're too ill to work?

Sick pay levels vary greatly. Those with more generous employers can expect two to three months on full pay. The less fortunate have to make do with the statutory minimum – £52.50 a week for 28 weeks. After that, the employer's responsibility ends and the State takes over. Recent changes have not only greatly reduced the level of state sickness benefit, but have also made them taxable.

That's why Midland has developed an income protection plan. The policy helps top up your income for as long as you're too ill to work. And if you're unable to return to full-time employment, the payments continue right up to normal retirement age. To arrange an appointment with a Midland Financial Planning Manager, call us on 0800 65 65 65

The Listening Bank

Member HSBC Group

For more information, complete and return the coupon to Midland Personal Financial Services, FREEPOST, Southampton SO15 1XF

Name
Address
Town
County
Postcode
Telephone

News in brief

British day tripper held in France

BRITON Brenda Price is being held in a French prison after being arrested in Lille on a day trip earlier this month, it was revealed yesterday. Mrs Price is detained in Loos prison near Lille on a Spanish extradition warrant issued four years ago. But she and her lawyer have no idea what charges she faces and because case papers have not been sent from Spain she cannot apply for bail.

Mrs Price, aged 45, from Harlow, Essex, has already appeared in a British court after being arrested and detained in Holloway prison on the same extradition warrant. That was in 1993 but the Spanish authorities were late in submitting the warrant and she was released. The offences alleged against her date back to 1991 when Spanish police accused her of being involved with smuggling cannabis.

Her French lawyer, Robert Thompson, said: "We don't know what she is accused of at the moment. She is totally bewildered. Her husband Samuel has been told he can only visit her once every three months, which is ridiculous."

BR shortens summer

BRITISH Rail's summer timetable will next year "shrink" to just 16 weeks — June 2 to September 21 — and unions fear cuts in holiday services. The spring bank holiday weekend in late May is not included.

British Rail said the shortening of the summer season, which covered 21 weeks in 1987, was to bring Britain into line with European rail services. There was scope for train companies to run extra summer trains if they wanted to. But Jimmy Knapp, leader of the RMT rail union, said yesterday: "This is just another way of reducing services. They have cut everything else except fares, so now they are cutting the length of summer."

Probation warning to Howard

THE probation officers' union is to seek a High Court ruling to prevent the dismantling of university training courses for probation trainees. Lawyers acting for the National Association of Probation Officers have given Michael Howard seven days notice to withdraw the plan or face a High Court judicial review case.

The Commons "statutory instrument" scrapping the 20-year-old legal requirement for new probation officers to have a college-based Diploma in Social Work was laid before Parliament last week to come into force on December 5. Lawyers acting for Napo believe that the failure of the Government to put anything in its place will mean unqualified people can be appointed as probation officers. "The work of the service will be diminished and the public put at risk," said Napo assistant general secretary Harry Fletcher. — *Alan Travis*

Gardeners for Westminster

ANOTHER Question Time is to make its debut in the hothouse of Westminster: Radio 4's Gardeners' Question Time. It will be recorded at the Palace of Westminster before peers and MPs for broadcast on Christmas eve. Gordon McMaster, Labour MP for Paisley and a horticulturalist, is to be a guest panellist.

The programme was invited to the Commons by the all-party Gardening Club. Members include chairman Sir Harold Walker, Paddy Ashdown, John Gummer, Ken Livingstone, Glenda Jackson and Janet Fookes. Politics, page 9. — *Andrew Culf*

Boots tops customer poll

BOOTS the Chemist has the best corporate image in terms of value for money and being in touch with its customers, according to a survey of Britain's leading companies published today. Research by consumer analysts Mintel revealed Boots was the public's top choice for value for money, perception of what they stood for, being in touch with customers, and trustworthiness. It was beaten only by The Body Shop in concern for environmental and social issues.

Five companies — Boots, Body Shop, Tesco, Sainsbury's and the BBC — shared the top four positions in each category. The public's Value For Money top 12 were: Boots; Tesco; Sainsbury's; BBC; Safeway; Virgin; The Body Shop; Cadbury's; BT; McDonald's; Thomson; British Gas. — *Andrew Culf*

£40m goes to 627 of 4,500 applicants ● Success rate even lower for 10,800 remaining

Lottery refuses 9 in 10 charities

Call for needy to have larger share of take

David Brindle on the first awards

We're in the money . . . Smiles from members of Brixton Youth Club in south London, one of the recipients of yesterday's tranche of awards totalling £40 million from the lottery charities board. About a quarter of the grants went to groups working with children PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

ALMOST nine in 10 charities that have sought National Lottery funding will be refused, the lottery charities board said yesterday as it announced its first grants totalling £40 million.

The warning prompted calls for the board to be given a larger share of the lottery's proceeds by cutting the Treasury's take, squeezing the other "good cause" boards, or reducing the profits taken by Camelot, the game's operator.

Stuart Etherington, chief executive of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, said: "The charities board has turned the tide and demonstrated that the lottery can help good charities very effectively. What the Government should do is look again at the proportion of money that goes to the board — and increase it."

David Sieff, the board's chairman, said it was up to ministers to decide if more cash should go to charities. But he added: "I certainly know how to spend it."

Controversy continued to dog the board as it announced that the £40 million would be split among 627 groups — fewer than 14 per cent of the 4,500 applications so far decided upon. The success rate is expected to be even lower among the 10,800 remaining bids for cash under the board's first programme, aimed at relieving poverty and disadvantage. After advance criticism of grants going to groups helping refugees and other "politically correct" causes, the board went out of its way to stress the breadth of its awards.

Timothy Hornsby, the board's chief executive, said: "Less than 1 per cent go to refugees — and they need it. Less than 3 per cent go to charities dealing with drug and alcohol addiction — and they need it. About 6 per cent go to ethnic minority groups — and they need it."

About a quarter of grants were going to groups working with children, and household names among recipients included citizen's advice bureaux (£1.9 million), the Royal National Institute for the Blind (£188,500), and Scope, formerly the Spastics Society (£315,000).

Some commentators had dwelled on a grant of £91,000 to the London-based Eritrean Advice and Information Centre, Mr Hornsby said. "So much play has been made about one refugee group, but it's a jolly good scheme."

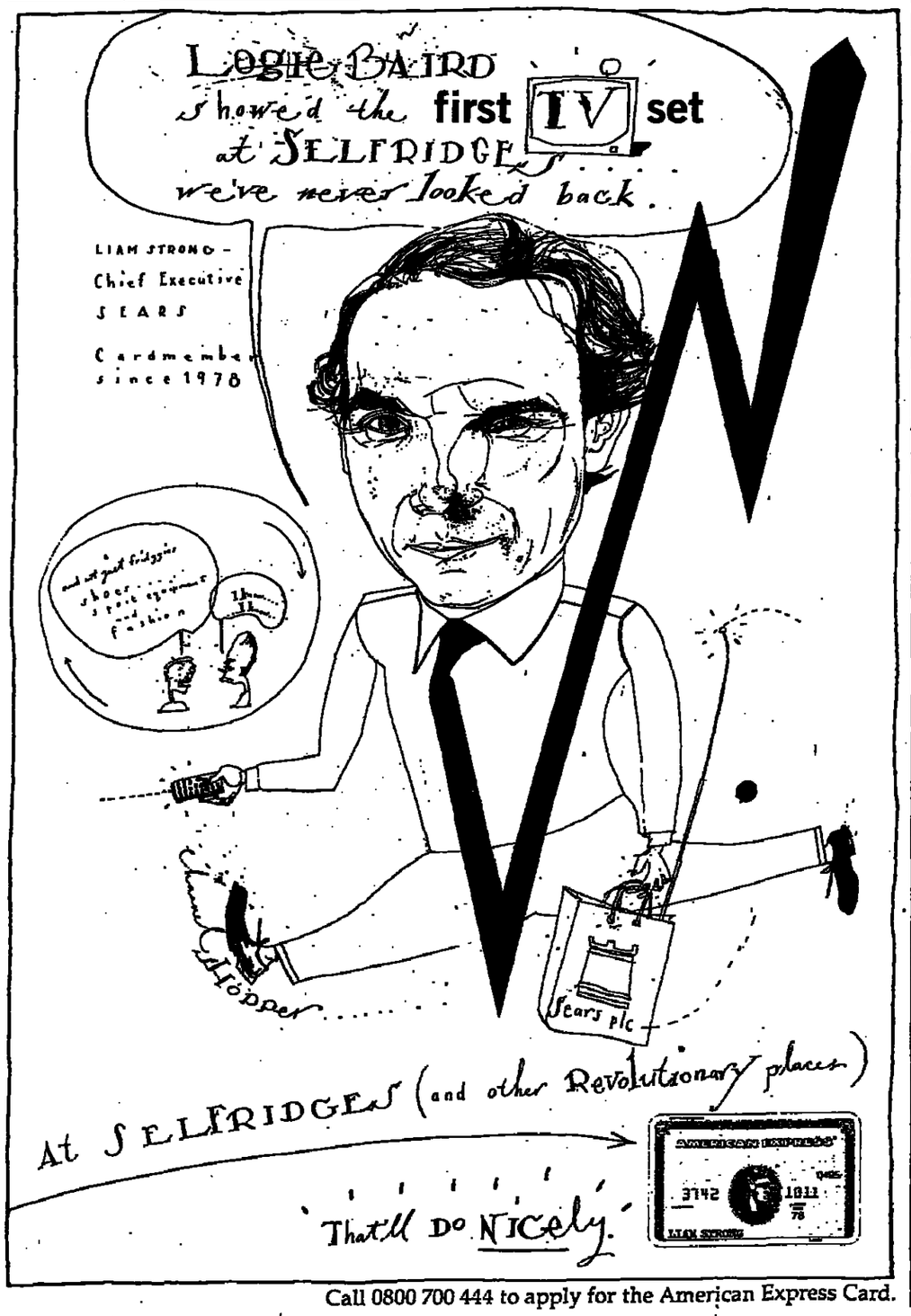
About 44 per cent of yesterday's grants money is going to groups in Scotland. The board says that this is because its Scottish arm has made faster progress in assessing bids and that further awards over the next two months — the first programme is worth a total £162 million — will favour England.

The board has purposely concentrated on helping smaller, community-based groups, with almost half of yesterday's grants going to organisations with annual income of less than £20,000.

Typical recipients include the 19th Swindon Scout group (£1,480 for a minibus and equipment); the Hull Council of Disabled People (£59,000 for a transport scheme); and the Dundee Cyrenians Night Shelter (£39,000 for a new hostel for homeless people).

Some charity experts are calling on the charities board to cut the average size of its grants and spread its limited funds further. There are concerns, too, about the impact on smaller groups of a large, one-off injection of cash — although the £64,000 mean average award yesterday disguises the fact half of all awards are less than £50,000. The board says it vets applicants to ensure they would not be destabilised and be able to continue smoothly in future.

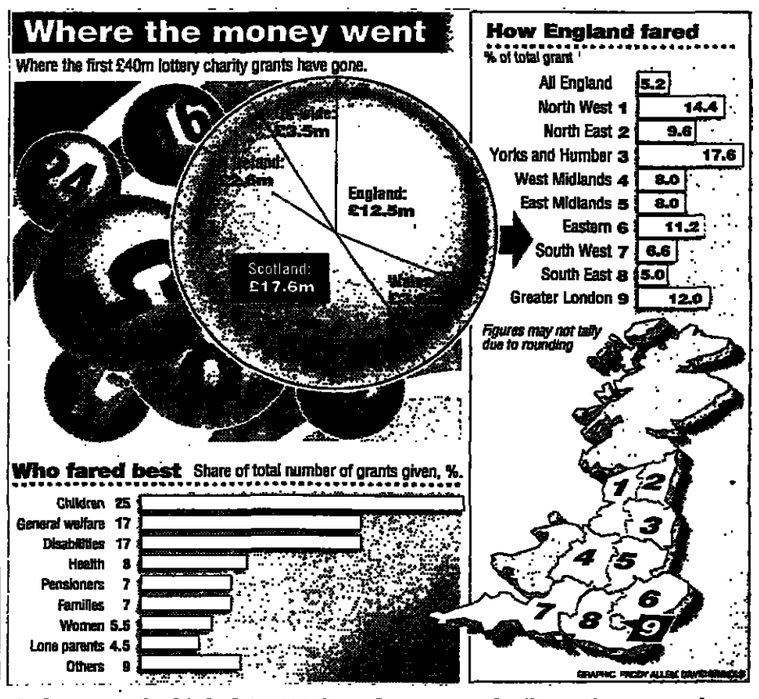
The board receives 5.6 per cent of lottery proceeds — as do the heritage, millennium, sports and arts boards. The Treasury keeps 12 per cent, ticket agents receive 5 per cent, and Camelot takes 5 per cent in costs and profit. Lottery winnings account for 50 per cent.



Call 0800 700 444 to apply for the American Express Card.

Winning projects rejoice for the people in need

David Ward with two beneficiaries



BESS was gobsmacked and Laser was speechless yesterday as they came to terms with sharing in the lottery's charity jackpot.

Bess, the Benchill Ecumenical Service Scheme, based on a large south Manchester council estate, picked up £97,000; Laser, the Liverpool Accessible Sensory Environment Resource, received £150,000.

Representatives from both organisations were much too polite to mention Covent Garden or Sadler's Wells, preferring to rejoice diplomatically that people in need would be getting some of their money back.

"We're delighted," said Sue Jenkins from Bess, formed by local Methodist, Anglican, and Roman Catholic churches. But there had been some anguished debate about whether money should be sought from such a source, particularly among the Methodists, who have a tradition of distaste for gambling.

No such qualms on Merseyside. "You have to look at the lottery objectively," said Kevin Cowdall, of Laser. "You have to treat it like any other fund-giving trust, admittedly the biggest in Europe. You have to look at the criteria, which this time were geared towards poverty and grassroots organisations. We fitted the criteria."

Bess was set up eight years ago to offer support, counselling and music and drama experiences to residents in an area of high unemployment and social deprivation. There are four support workers, two of whom work principally with young families.

The lottery money will help develop a family support centre set up at the Methodist church a year ago. It is open five days a week, providing a play group, mother and toddler group, clothing shop, and credit union.

"The residents of Benchill had no real voice and were not being heard," said Ms Jenkins. "They had very low self-esteem. The vision of Bess was to develop the skills and confidence of local people through music and drama."

Laser was equally happy to take its chance with 15,000 other applicants. "Every time you make an application to a fund, you are competing. It's a competition — a lottery," said Mr Cowdall. "Our application seems to have been what they were looking for."

Mr Cowdall estimates that 95 per cent of Laser's potential client group will be lottery players. He said he will look to City Challenge and other sources to fund the balance on an ambitious £850,000 scheme to convert the Owenite Hall of Science, in Liverpool, into a centre providing therapy, play, education, and stimulation for children with disabilities. At its heart will be a sensory stimulation room, hence the project's tongue-twisting title.

The judge has learnt a lot about Whitehall culture over the past few years. He is on his guard, determined to be careful. That helps to explain the time he has taken to write his report. It does not mean that he will tailor his findings. Despite the Government's best efforts, it is sure to rock Whitehall.
Richard Norton-Taylor on the Scott report

G2 page 7

Personal insults put environment chief in jeopardy

Commissioner fouls EU nest

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Foreign Staff

A EUROPEAN Union commissioner faced an uncertain future yesterday after launching a series of unprecedented personal attacks on the continent's leaders and exposing divisions within the commision itself.

The outspoken environment commissioner, Ms Ritt Bjerregaard, of Denmark, dismissed President Jacques Chirac as just another man trying to act tough. She called the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, "absent-minded" and said that the Spanish prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, lacked will.

Ms Bjerregaard has committed her comments to print: her book, The Commissioner's Diary, will be published next month. Writing in a Danish newspaper, Jyllands Posten, Ms Bjerregaard, said President Chirac viewed the European Commission president, Jacques Santer, with contempt. Mr Chirac was trying to flex "his muscles so people can see what a strong man they have elected" and doubted that he would grow with the job.

She described Mr Gonzalez as unimpressive and said Dr Kohl deliberately ignored her when they met.

Ms Bjerregaard is no stranger to controversy. She has been the most forthright commisioner in opposing French nuclear testing. This met with severe criticism from fellow commissioners who believe she has played to the gallery while being outmanoeuvred by the French.

The remarks appear to make no distinction between the high-profile commissioner's private conversations and public meetings. Their publication could not have come at a worse time for her, becoming known as the commission was gathering last night to discuss what to do next about French nuclear testing.

Her handling of the nuclear issue met with severe criticism from fellow commissioners who believe she has played to the gallery while being outmanoeuvred by the French. To find out that she believes some of them are indolent and ill-briefed will not have gone down well.

Ms Bjerregaard's book claims: "The relationship between Mr Chirac and Mr Santer is bad, first and foremost because Mr Chirac is totally indifferent about Mr Santer and is treating him carelessly and superficially ... he made a very bad impression."

On the French decision to resume nuclear testing she wrote: "They are a typical example of the need of a new head of state to flex his muscles in order that people become aware of how strong a man they have elected ... It will be difficult for Mr Chirac to recover from losing face in that affair. But that cannot be my problem."

Since joining the commission she has become embroiled in rows over continuing to claim her Danish ministerial pension and then over-charging for articles written in the Danish press.

Franc hit as Chirac flies to crucial summit in Bonn

John Palmer in Brussels

PRESIDENT Jacques Chirac flies to Bonn tomorrow in an attempt to relaunch the troubled Franco-German alliance and put renewed momentum behind moves to closer European union. Even as he prepared to leave Paris, the franc was hit by renewed turmoil on world currency markets. The president also faced possible legal investigation into the lease on his luxury Paris flat.

Doubts about France's ability to meet the conditions for a single European currency in 1999 and policy differences about reform of EU institutions have threatened the Franco-German alliance which has traditionally provided the force behind closer integration.

The franc came under massive selling pressure yesterday when the state prosecutor was asked whether Mr Chirac could be charged over the terms of a lease he negotiated on his elegant Left Bank flat with a housing firm subsidised by the city of Paris. He was mayor of Paris before being elected president.

Two weeks ago the prime minister, Alain Juppé, narrowly escaped prosecution over a low-rent flat leased from the Paris city authorities.

Diplomats said all this threatened to overshadow what was being described as a critical summit with Chancellor Helmut Kohl. "This meeting should make it clear whether the two leaders can agree about the future of the EU and whether Chirac is going to be the reliable French partner essential for Kohl's entire European strategy," a senior European Commission official said last night.

The French president is ready to reassure Dr Kohl that France will take whatever economic measures are necessary to ensure that it can be part of European monetary union at the end of the decade. Mr Chirac insists that he will not be deflected from the goal of monetary union by the wave of social unrest which has threatened the government's austerity policies.

In Luxembourg last night, the French finance minister, Jean Arthuis, insisted that the move to a single currency could not be postponed beyond 1999 as some German politicians have hinted may become necessary. "France does not have the means to wait ... and [it] has all of the trumps needed to succeed and not delay on the schedule," he said.

Dr Kohl knows that he cannot win the political battle to persuade Germans to give up the D-mark and accept a single currency if the French are not ready to join it and other core EU countries in monetary union.

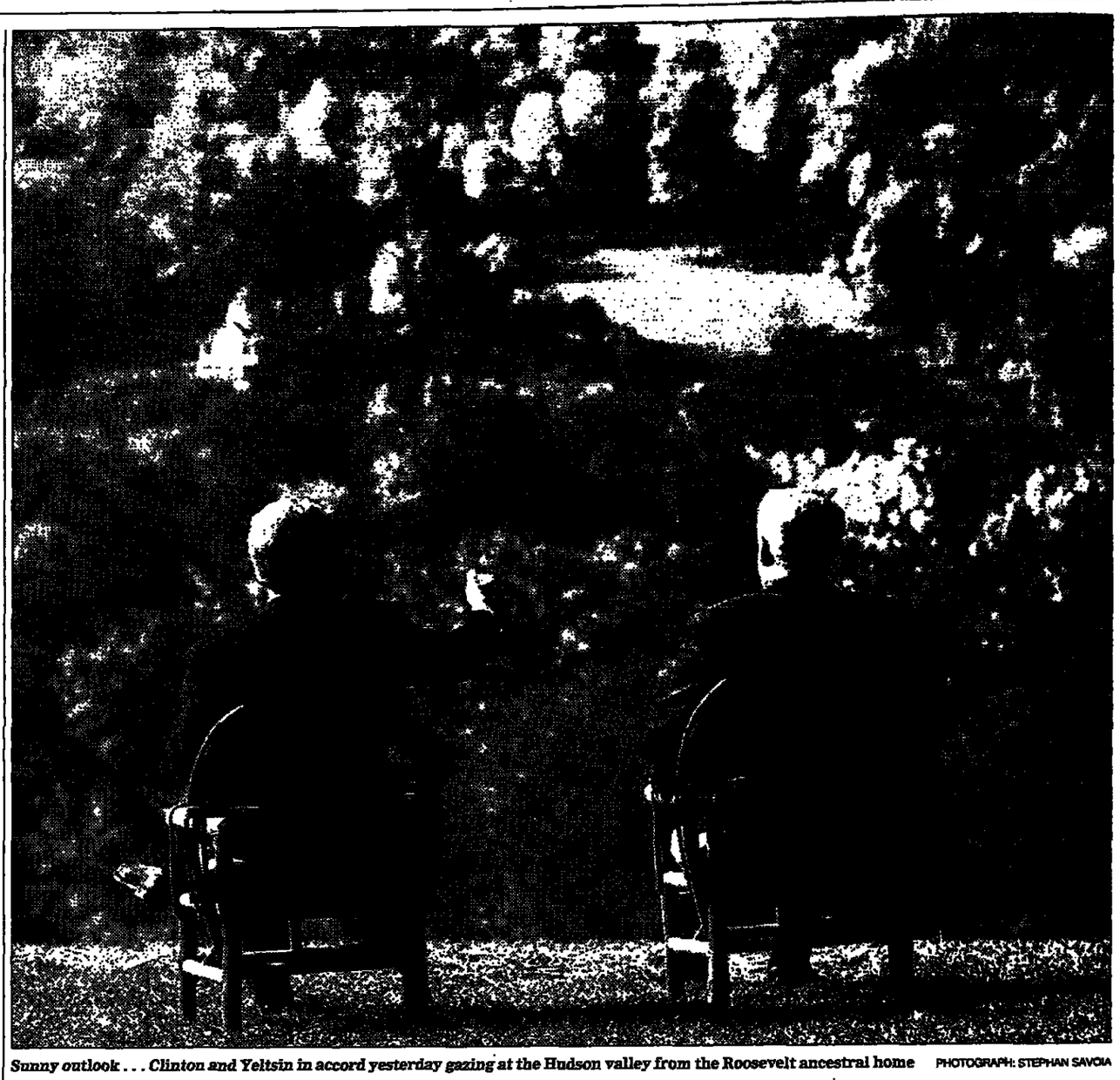
But when the franc falls on world markets, it becomes more difficult for Paris to meet the Maastricht treaty conditions for being part of the single currency while also boosting growth and reducing unemployment, sources said.

France is now also ready to join Germany in pressing for closer European political union during the 1996 review of the Maastricht treaty. Mr Chirac will tell Dr Kohl that he will back greater use of majority vote decisions by EU ministers, including some aspects of foreign and security policy and justice and immigration affairs, diplomats said.

In a further concession to Germany and other EU partners, Mr Chirac is expected to signal his readiness to rejoin the Schengen group countries which have scrapped internal border controls, provided that steps are taken to strengthen immigration controls with non-Schengen countries. Meanwhile France and Germany appear closer to agreement on how to give the EU a bigger voice in foreign and security policy while gradually bringing defence within the EU.

If France and Germany can agree on a common line for the 1996 conference, most other EU countries are likely to fall into line, leaving the British government more isolated than ever. However Bonn and Paris have not yet fully worked out some contentious issues, such as what precise powers the European Parliament should be given to shape EU legislation affecting justice, immigration and police co-operation.

The two leaders are expected to meet again in Germany on December 7 to try to finalise a common position.



Sunny outlook ... Clinton and Yeltsin in accord yesterday gazing at the Hudson valley from the Roosevelt ancestral home PHOTOGRAPH: STEPHAN SAVOIA

Russia drawn in to Bosnian peace plans

Martin Walker in New York

A BREAKTHROUGH agreement to secure Russian participation in implementing a Bosnian peace agreement was reached yesterday between President Clinton and Boris Yeltsin during their private summit at Hyde Park, away from the United Nations 50th anniversary gathering, Russian sources said last night.

Under the agreement, Russia "is enabled to play an honourable and responsible role in a vital issue of European security" without subordinating Russian troops to Nato command, the sources said.

At a press conference later Mr Clinton said he and Mr Yeltsin had reached "complete agreement" on the issue. "It's important for Russia to participate in the agreement."

Mr Yeltsin added: "We agreed today that Russian armed forces will participate in the operations, but how they go about doing it is the affair of the military. It is not a question for us two presidents. We have done our tasks."

The deal was reached at Franklin Roosevelt's old family home at Hyde Park, redolent with memories of the wartime alliance against fascism. Mr Clinton and Mr Yeltsin sat in the same chairs that Roosevelt and Churchill had used 55 years ealier.

The meeting was the last chance for the two leaders to meet before the US-sponsored peace talks between Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia begin next week at a US air force base in Ohio. There are hopes of an agreement that would trigger the deployment of a Nato intervention force.

Much of President Clinton's prestige and possibly his re-election depends on securing a Bosnian peace, to reinforce his claim that in Haiti and Northern Ireland, the Middle East and now in Bosnia, he has important foreign policy achievements to his credit. Foreign policy does not win presidential elections, but foreign disasters can lose them, and Mr Clinton's early embarrassments in Somalia and Bosnia have not entirely been overcome.

With the US financial aid budget for Russia down to an almost token $400 million this year, Mr Clinton has few sticks or carrots. He has already played his one trump card, slowing the process of Nato enlargement so that the accession of Poland and the advance of Nato to the Russian frontier will not loom over Russian parliamentary elections in December and the presidential vote next June.

Although postponed, the enlargement of Nato remains a fundamental divide between Russia and the US and gives Mr Yeltsin constant grounds to complain that Nato is not only a hangover from the cold war, but also a European club which polarises every security issue it touches into a new East-West dispute. Bosnian peacekeeping, he complained in his UN address, was a classic example.

Despite warm personal relations with "my friend Bill", as he called him yesterday, Mr Yeltsin insists that Russia not be taken for granted. The open hostility of the Republican Congress, which has threatened to cut all financial support if Russia proceeds with the sale of nuclear power stations to Iran, and voted to develop the old Star Wars system and nullify the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, is a deepening irritant.

In their frustration with Congress, the US and Russian presidents find common ground.

Congress is in no mood to provide $1.5 billion to send 20,000 US ground troops into a potential quagmire in Bosnia. The task in Congress was made more difficult yesterday, when the defence secretary William Perry conceded that "until we see what the peace agreement says", he could not guarantee that the mission would last no more than a year.

● President Clinton said at the press conference with Mr Yeltsin that the US and Russia had agreed to seek a total ban on nuclear weapons tests next year. "This is a major, major step and it dramatically increases the chances of our success for a sweeping, comprehensive test ban treaty."

Serbs accept troops along border of 'republic'

THE Bosnian Serb parliament has accepted the deployment of peace troops along the border of its self-declared republic, but only from Russia and "other friendly countries", the Bosnian Serb news agency reported from Bijeljina, near the border with Serbia, yesterday.

Meanwhile two British soldiers were wounded near Jajce, in eastern Bosnia, when one of them stepped on an anti-personnel mine while they were trying to retrieve the bodies of dead Croat soldiers, a UN spokesman said yesterday. — Reuter.

Kohl snubs UN's birthday party

Ian Traynor in Bonn

WHILE the world's high and mighty congregate in New York for the United Nations' birthday bash, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany is avoiding the beanfeast.

He explained yesterday: "Quite honestly, I find this really disturbing ... All you do is hand out your business cards every five minutes."

Last week, a spokesman sought to blame Dr Kohl's absence from New York on his busy Bonn schedule. It seemed a lame excuse for a leader proud of his networking skills. Even stranger, Dr Kohl is pressing hard for a permanent seat on the UN security council, convinced that reunited Germany, as Europe's primary power, merits at least equal status with Britain and France. The New York bash would have provided the ideal opportunity for the chancellor to throw his formidable weight behind his claim.

But that honour fell to Klaus Kinkel, the foreign minister whose clout has been falling for months.

Yesterday Dr Kohl made it plain he was snubbing the UN because it was essentially a waste of time. "There are no negotiations going on. It's just a birthday party. You only get to speak for five minutes and get a photo opportunity with the secretary-general. I'll address the general assembly at the next opportunity when I can be heard." But he did not know when that would be.

According to Bonn rumour, Dr Kohl is fuming that he has lost the battle to decide who will replace Willy Claes of Belgium as the new Nato chief.

News in brief

Barzani routs Turkish Kurds

Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democractic Party in nothern Iraq claimed yesterday that it had routed the forces of Turkey's Kurdish separatists, the PKK, from Dahok province, killing more than 550 of its fighters in the past six weeks.

The assault, in which 90 civilians also died, was continuing, it added. — Agencies.

Slush fund inquiry

President Kim Young-sam of South Korea has ordered an investigation of allegations that his predecessor and close ally Roh Rae-woo operated a huge slush fund. — Reuter.

Embassy plea

Israelis have delivered 70,000 postcards to the US embassy in Tel Aviv asking President Clinton not to block a congressional bill requiring the mission to move to Jerusalem. — AP.

Afghan bombing

Aircraft of the Taliban militia have bombed an Afghan government army base west of the capital Kabul, wounding one man but causing no damage to the base. — Reuter.

COULD YOU BE READY TO WORK ANYWHERE ON THIS PAGE WITHIN 24 HOURS?

You could be providing medical aid in Rwanda, designing suspension bridges in Nepal or resuitating a hospital in Western Samoa.

British Army Officers can be called upon to help anywhere in the world, and at any time. Because unfortunately, its impossible to predict exactly where or when events that require our presence will happen.

If you'd work any time, any place, anywhere, call Army Officer on 0345 300 111 or fill in the coupon. Then travel to your nearest post box.

To apply as an Officer you should be aged 16-24, ideally with A-levels or a degree. For more details post this coupon to Army Officer Entry, Freepost 4335, Dept. 2439, Bristol BS1 3YX or telephone 0345 300 111 quoting ref 2439. The Army is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE AGE

ARMY OFFICER

BE THE BEST

DIGITAL 'FLIP' PRICE THAT'S A SNIP.

LIMITED OFFER £9.99 INC. VAT CONNECTED FREE TO VODAFONE PERSONALWORLD

MOTOROLA INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL 5200.

- International GSM digital cellular network
- 100 name/number memory
- 60 mins talk-time
- Complete with battery and rapid charger
- Weight approx 285g

FREE CONNECTION TO VODAFONE PERSONALWORLD	
Monthly Rental	£17.63 (£15+VAT)
Peak Rate Calls anywhere	42p per min (35p+VAT)
Off Peak Calls	14p per min (15p+VAT)

Peak times 7.00-19.00 Mon to Fri. Itemised billings charged at £1.77 (ex VAT) per month. Line rental (billed monthly in advance) and airtime charges will be debited to your nominated credit/charge or Debit card. Calls charged in units of 30 seconds after the first minute. Overseas access £5.92 (inc VAT) for 28 days.

14 DAY PEACE OF MIND

14 day money back guarantee. Phone for full details.

Trust Cellphones Direct to make a world of difference to digital phone prices. With connection to the Vodafone PersonalWorld Tariff included FREE of charge. So you can use the phone throughout the UK, most of Europe and beyond on the GSM international network. With digital call clarity and absolute confidentiality.

Simply phone us with your credit card details to receive your phone and valuable extras worth over £48.50 within 4 working days.

With no delivery charges and no hidden extras.

FREE IN-CAR ADAPTOR PLUS FREE LEATHER CARRYING CASE PLUS FREE DELIVERY IN 4 WORKING DAYS

TOGETHER WORTH OVER £48.50

Cellphones Direct

THE NAME TO TRUST IN TELEPHONE SHOPPING

FREEPHONE 0500 000 888

CREDIT CARD ORDERING HOTLINE WEEKDAYS 9AM TO 9PM WEEKENDS 9AM TO 4PM

PLEASE HAVE YOUR CREDIT CARD AND THIS ADVERTISEMENT READY WHEN YOU CALL AND QUOTE REF 1863 (SORRY WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT SWITCH CARDS)

Offer subject to status and a standard airtime contract for each phone with Cellphones Direct Ltd. 185 Lower Richmond Road, Richmond-upon-Thames TW9 4LN. Written terms and conditions available on request. © Copyright. Registered No. 2995222.

Investigators hampered in effort to compile evidence of genocide

Rwanda tribunal chief struggles to win funds

Chris McGreal in Johannesburg

THE international tribunal pursuing Rwanda's worst mass murderers — the Hutu politicians and officials who organised last year's anti-Tutsi genocide — is battling to collect evidence despite its announcement that the first indictments are expected in December.

The timing of the indictments was in the balance until last week when an investigator from the Yugoslavia tribunal was despatched to assess whether sufficient evidence had been collected for prosecutions or whether they would have to be delayed until next year.

The investigation has been hampered by the United Nations' lack of funds and overbearing bureaucracy, disputes between agencies, and the use of investigators who are out of their depth in Rwanda.

The tribunal also has to cope with unco-operative governments, especially Kenya which is openly hostile and sheltering some of the former Hutu leaders eventually expected to be charged with genocide.

In desperation, investigators for the chief prosecutor, Judge Richard Goldstone, have approached human rights workers for advice on which prosecutions would make the kind of high profile cases that would grab international attention and build more support for the tribunal.

Those expected to be indicted soon are prominent politicians and senior officials involved in some of the most co-ordinated massacres, where thousands of people were herded into churches or stadiums, held for days and then slaughtered.

"If we show these sexy cases, then we can go back to the international community and say: See what we can do. And if you give us more resources and time, we can do an even better job," one investigator said.

But it has been an uphill task.

Judge Goldstone's investigators did not begin work in Rwanda until more than a year after hundreds of thousands of Tutsis were murdered in the genocide.

When they finally arrived, witnesses were shocked to discover that investigators had only the broadest knowledge of the killings, although many were already well documented.

Initially investigators were barred from talking to Rwandans, because a witness protection programme was not yet in place. Instead they concentrated on foreigners, who usually had only secondhand accounts of the genocide.

Judge Goldstone concedes that investigations have been hampered, although he says the principal problem has been the UN's bureaucracy and cash crunch. Even now there are only 30 tribunal investigators in Rwanda. Another 20 are expected within a week, but given the scale of the inquiry some still think the number insufficient.

Judge Goldstone blames "a UN system where they've got bureaucratic hurdles added to financial problems. All the staff have to be employed through New York. We went through exactly the same problems with Yugoslavia."

The judge added; "Only at this point are we getting investigators into the field. So far our information is based on others' investigations, their signposts."

That has proved a serious obstacle for the investigators. The tribunal is being forced to rely on evidence collected principally by the UN human rights mission in Kigali, which began collating testimony months before the tribunal's staff arrived.

Misunderstandings have soured relations between the two agencies. Both now hope that the appointment of a new head of the UN mission this month will ease the tension.

Junta blocks restoration of Suu Kyi's party role

Nicholas Cumming-Bruce in Bangkok

THE Burmese authorities have restricted the political activity of the Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, four months after releasing her from six years' house arrest, by rejecting her reappointment as general secretary of the National League for Democracy.

Earlier this month the NLD restored her to the post she occupied before her arrest and in which she led it to a landslide election victory in 1990. The government refused to recognise the results of the election.

The reappointment was seen as a veiled challenge to the State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc). Its leaders said after releasing her that they would consider starting a dialogue with her, but now they seem intent on keeping her to the political sidelines.

A senior official said earlier this month that there was no need for Slorc to have a dialogue with anyone while debate continued in the national convention on drafting a new constitution.

The NLD was forced to drop Ms Suu Kyi from the job in 1991 to retain its political party status after the government introduced regulations prohibiting parties from keeping members who faced charges by the state.

A member of the government's election commission, which regulates the affairs of political parties, said her reappointment was illegal under rules requiring the commission's approval of leadership changes.

The rules also blocked the recent appointment of two party veterans, Tin Oo and Kyi Maung, released from jail in March, as vice-chairmen.

Large crowds continue to flock to the gate of Ms Suu Kyi's residence in the capital to hear her impromptu comments on present events, clearly advertising her enduring popularity.

But in the absence of any dialogue with Slorc, diplomats say, she is left with little room to manoeuvre.

Bountiful hostess puts poor on her guest list

Suzanne Goldenberg in Madras explains why the chief minister of Tamil Nadu is handing out presents to 1,000 newly-weds

EVERYBODY loves a wedding, none more than J. Jayalalitha, the chief minister of India's southern state of Tamil Nadu, who will preside over the union of more than 1,000 couples on Thursday.

The newly-weds will be given money to set up house and their parents will receive new clothes, all courtesy of the state government.

The mass event is intended to take the sting out of an earlier marriage ceremony, a lavish affair binding Ms Jayalalitha's foster son, V. N. Sudhakaran, to the grand-daughter of a screen idol from the black-and-white era. Mr Sudhakaran, a television executive, is the nephew of Sasikala Natrajan, Ms Jayalalitha's controversial confidante.

For nearly five years Ms Jayalalitha, a former film star, received widespread adulation.

But her extravagant spending last month has become a symbol of her disregard for the concerns of poor people.

Lawyers and the media have been chafing against Ms Jayalalitha's authoritarian style for months, and political opponents have accused her and Sasikala Natrajan of abusing power to amass private fortunes.

At last her popularity among the poor is under threat. "Now, with the wedding, everyone is an eyewitness to her corruption," said V. S. Chandralekha, a leader of the Janata Party which has campaigned zealously to unmask Ms Jayalalitha. Ms Chandralekha blames thugs from the ruling All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam party (AIADMK) for throwing acid on her in 1992.

It is still uncertain how Ms Jayalalitha — who has forsaken the chief minister's salary for a token one rupee (2p) a month — paid for the wedding, although several businesses have admitted contributing.

Estimates for the extravaganza have fluctuated wildly, but the income tax department has settled on between £3 million and £4 million. It has been helped in its inquiries by outraged citizens who made videos of the spectacle.

Ms Jayalalitha has not answered an income tax questionnaire about her spending on the wedding, and is expected to be served with a summons.

The financial authorities have raided the offices of Ms

J. Jayalalitha ... Fading star could lose the part

Natrajan and a number of her associates in connection with alleged financial irregularities at the television station controlled by her family.

A brother of the groom has been arrested and, after pleading ill health, is being detained in a Madras hospital. Another brother is on the run. Mr Sudhakaran cut short his honeymoon to consult lawyers for fear that he, too, might be arrested.

AIADMK has responded to the almost daily reports of raids on Ms Natrajan's business partners by organising demonstrations of loyalty to Ms Jayalalitha. Three youths were so upset at the criticism that they set themselves alight. Their families have received £2,000 in compensation.

Party activists have blocked roads and railway lines throughout the state and held sit-ins on the flight paths of arriving aircraft.

But the show of strength is not entirely convincing and Ms Jayalalitha's ministers are clearly worried.

To add to her woes, she now faces a potential challenger in Rajnikant, a newer and more popular film star. He already has an embryonic party organisation in his network of fan clubs.

Film stars have adorned Tamil Nadu politics for 20 years, ever since the late M. G. Ramachandran moved from playing angry young men and Hindu gods to politics.

MGR, as he was generally known, founded AIADMK, and before his death he made Ms Jayalalitha, his leading lady on-screen and in real life, his political heir.

Having made a number of speeches attacking the chief minister though, Rajnikant appears to be having second thoughts about a career in politics. He said last month he would reveal his intentions nearer the time of state polls, due with general elections next spring.

Rajnikant is said to be uneasy about abandoning his lucrative film career.

But several politicians in the state are looking for ways to capitalise on Rajnikant's willingness to speak out against Ms Jayalalitha.

The first in the queue is R.M. Veerappan, a veteran AIADMK member, who was dropped from the cabinet last month for appearing too friendly with Rajnikant.

The Congress (I) Party, which has been in opposition for 25 years, is also trying to cultivate Rajnikant. Congress leaders have said they are exploring the prospect of sponsoring a breakaway AIADMK, led by Rajnikant and Mr Veerappan.

But the main opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Party has dismissed Rajnikant as a "prisoner of indecision".

Deadly start to Algerian election

Lamine Ghanmi in Algiers

SECURITY forces searched yesterday for Muslim rebels behind two car bombs that killed 10 people and wounded more than 80 as Algeria's disputed presidential election campaign got off to a violent start.

Sunday's bombs and weekend killings, in which five peasants had their throats cut and two men were gunned down, came as President Liamine Zeroual cancelled planned talks in New York with the French president, Jacques Chirac.

Algerian newspapers said Mr Zeroual, one of four men standing in the election that Muslim fundamentalists have vowed to wreck, had strengthened his hand by putting Paris in its place. Omar Belhouchet, editor of the respected independent newspaper El Watan, said: "He scores marks with Algerian opinion in which nationalism is still very touchy."

Mr Zeroual could not afford to listen to "lessons in political behaviour" from Mr Chirac at the beginning of a presidential campaign. L'Authentique newspaper said that "it was heart-warming for humble people to see Zeroual taking the decision".

Algeria's presidency spokesman said Mr Zeroual called off the talks because the "persistency of one-sided attitudes ... created a situation in which the contemplated meeting between the Algerian and French heads of state has lost its *raison d'être*." Statements in France over the talks were "a blow to the dignity and sovereignty of the Algerian people."

In New York, Mr Chirac claimed that Mr Zeroual cancelled the meeting because the French president rejected a joint photographic session. "Since the election campaign has begun in Algeria, I did not want there to be any ambiguity," Mr Chirac said.

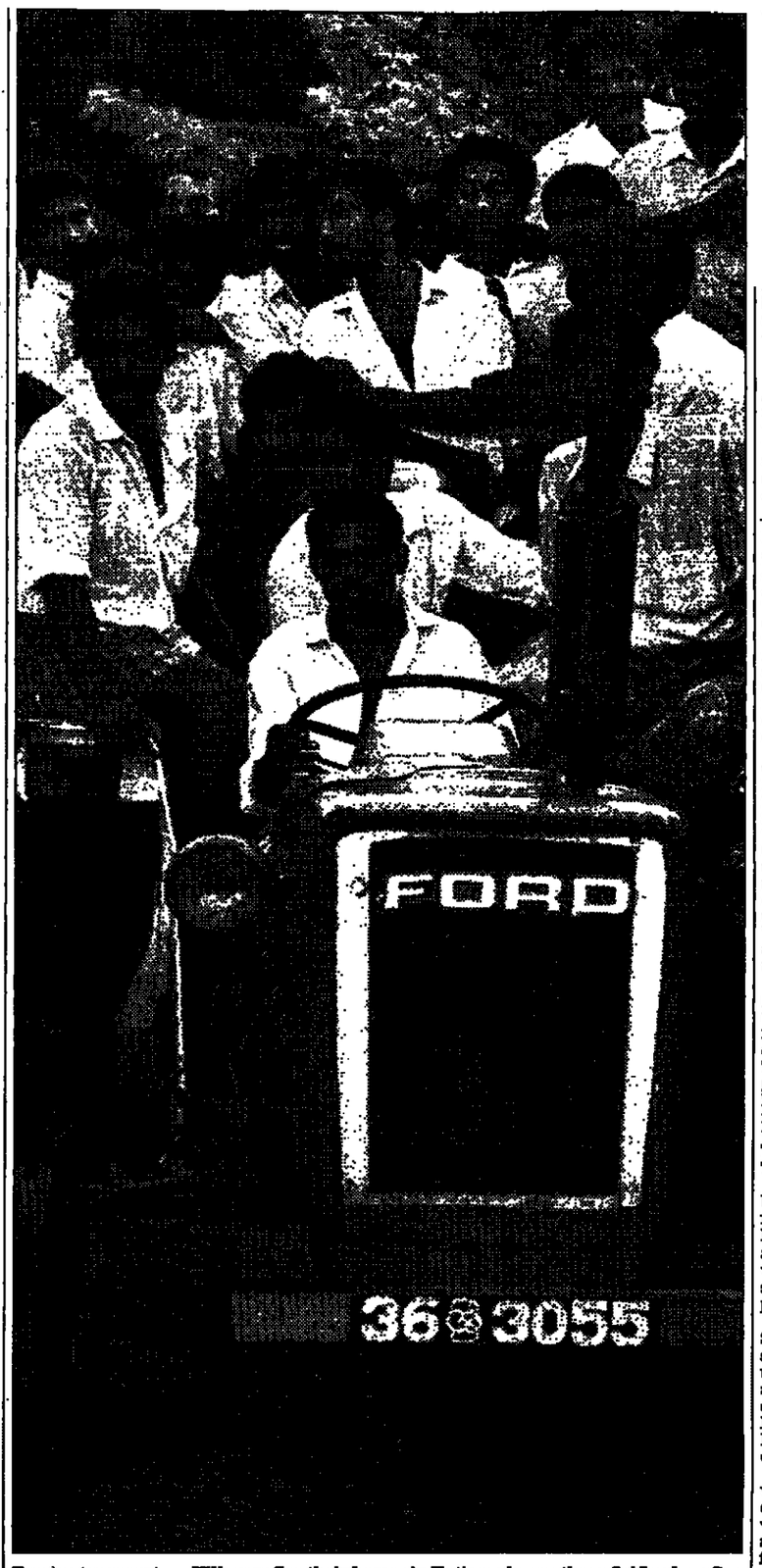
French politicians, Algeria's main secular opposition parties which are boycotting the election and Islamic militants had warned Mr Chirac not to go ahead with the meeting. French politicians feared the meeting would be seen as endorsing Mr Zeroual.

Bomb attacks in France have killed seven people since July. Paris has blamed Algerian militants trying to end what they see as French backing for the government.

Mr Zeroual, a general who has ruled unelected since January 1994, is favoured to win Algeria's first plural presidential election. — Reuter.

In theory, the examination of media conduct is a deserving enough enterprise. There are worthy questions of probity and privacy, of monopolies and malpractice. But they're not going to be asked by one journalist of another, are they?
Catherine Bennett on the media's obsession with the media

Page 9



Tractor transport ... Villagers flee their homes in Kotiyagala, southern Sri Lanka, after the fourth attack by Tamil rebels in three days killed 19 people PHOTOGRAPH: DEXTER CRUEZ

Village in shock at Tiger killings

Nick Macfie in Boatta, Sri Lanka

A PEACEFUL Sri Lankan village, a mix of Sinhalese and Tamil farmers whose biggest worry was rogue elephants trampling crops, is in shock after Tamil rebels massacred 36 men, women and children.

Blood marks the dirt floors and wooden beds where residents of Boatta in eastern Sri Lanka were shot in their sleep on Saturday by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Yesterday children were still crying for lost mothers. Adults grieved in and around a bleak school hall, listening to police telling them not to think of revenge. All await resettlement in safer villages.

"We've seen similar things happen in other villages, but it is the first time it happened here," said D. Siriwardena, aged 41. "Here Tamils and Sinhalese live side by side and there has never been any problem. There are mixed marriages and everyone is related to everyone else. Weddings, funerals and alms-giving, we do it together."

That calm of the picture postcard village, set among recently-harvested paddy fields, was shattered early on Saturday when the Tigers crept out of the jungle and burst into the mud huts. Babies only a few months old were among the victims. Both Sinhalese and Tamils were targets: 10 Tamils died.

The LTTE, which has been fighting for 12 years for an independent Tamil homeland in the the north and east, is fighting an advancing army in the rebel stronghold of the Jaffna peninsula.

In the latest massacre on Sunday, rebels armed with swords and knives hacked to death 19 men, women and children in the remote eastern Sinhalese hamlet of Kotiyagala. One boy had his head chopped off; another his arms.

Boatta was one of three villages attacked on Saturday in which 71 people were killed. The villages lie at the crossroads of the conflict, between Tiger- and government-controlled areas. — Reuter.

Argos

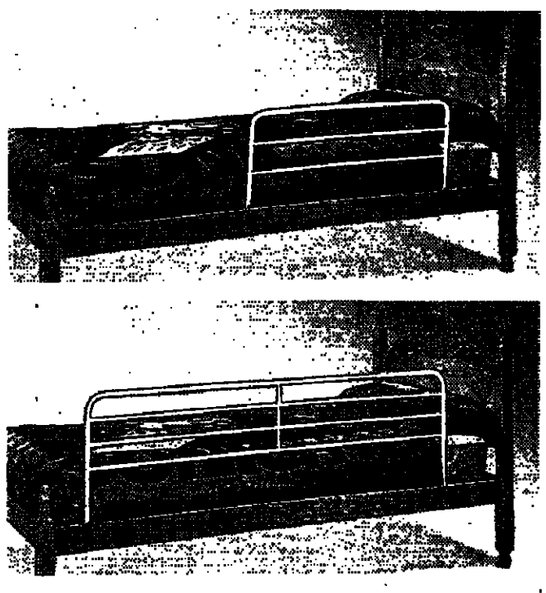
IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE

BED GUARDS

Page 375 Current Argos Catalogue
(Page 601 Superstore Catalogue)

PRODUCT RECALL

Following our recent advice to parents stating that bed guards are not suitable for use with babies and/or small children, in the interest of safety and to avoid any possibility of customer concern, we have decided to recall all bed guards previously sold by Argos.



If you have purchased a bed guard from Argos, please return it to your nearest store for a full refund.

The **Guardian**
Tuesday October 24 1995
Edition Number 46,380
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER
Fax No. 0171-837 4530
E-mail: letters@guardian.co.uk

What's the fuss about?

Money for the poor. Isn't that what charity's for?

TIMOTHY HORNSBY, the man in charge of handing out the first Lottery cash awards for charities, was absolutely right to come out fighting yesterday. After a politically inspired PR *disaster over the weekend it needed* someone to put the record straight in a forthright manner. Truth, like charity, begins at home. Some of the tabloid papers had given the highly misleading impression that most of the money on offer was going to fund minority groups like the Eritrean Advice and Information Centre in order to help immigrants claim benefits. In fact, as Mr Hornsby told BBC Breakfast News: "Less than one per cent is going to refugees. They need it. Less than three per cent is *going to drug related groups and they* need it." Well said. It won't stop the tabloid fairy tales being repeated ad nauseam, but it at least clears the air. The other 97 per cent of the £40 million will be widely distributed among hundreds of deserving causes up and down the land ranging from £9,000 for play equipment for children in Northern Ireland to £666,000 for an anti-poverty project in Strathclyde set up by this government in the 1980s. London, so often accused of pre-empting resources, *this time only receives 3.87 per cent of* the total. And the grant to the London-based Eritrean Centre, far from being exclusively devoted to informing them of their legal rights towards entitlement (and why not?), also involves counselling to avoid poverty and isolation plus advice on health housing, education and training. At a time when the Government is planning to reduce Britain's contribution to the overseas aid budget why should anyone need to apologise about helping refugees whom we have accepted to live here?

After the fracas over the grants to the Royal Opera House and Eton College (albeit in association with a local athletics club) yesterday's announcement should have been totally non-controversial. Sure, the charities side of the lottery has been slower than others to get off the ground but with good reason since it has had more applications to *process than the rest of them put* together. Only 15 per cent of the applicants for the £160 million available for yesterday's distribution (plus two more in November and December) will be successful so the selection process is bound to take some time and inevitably there will be some deserving causes ignored and perhaps some undeserving causes slipping through the net. But in aggregate the National Lottery Charities Board is approaching its difficult task with the right combination of poli*tics and humanity. It was right to* concentrate its first awards on charities serving small disadvantaged community groups who not only find it more difficult to raise money than the well known brand images but also find themselves neglected by government itself. The next tranche of grants in November will focus on youth and those disadvantaged by low income. Isn't this what charity is all about?

Lottery money, correctly, is not supposed to be plastering over the cracks of *the welfare state but there are so many* poor groups whom the welfare state has simply passed by. Some of the big charities may be miffed because they have suffered falls in their incomes as a result of donors thinking they have already done their bit for charity by purchasing lottery tickets. They will have their chance in later distributions and in any case they are better able to look after themselves than small charities. Had they taken the lion's share of these grants, the board would not only have been damned for siding with the mighty, but there would have been very little left for the others. "Charity", as Bacon said, "will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool".

Sir James Goldsmith to the rescue

Don't laugh: his candidates could swing a group of key marginals

THE millionaire politician — the man of destiny who rides out of the west to save democracy from itself — might seem more naturally at home elsewhere than in Britain. But Sir James Goldsmith, following the trail pioneered by Silvio Berlusconi and Ross Perot, is now clearly prepared to run a pro-referendum candidate in every constituency in Britain's next general election. Sir James's optimism, like that of the Natural Law Party of which he is a less gentle version, does him a sort of credit. But if British political history teaches anything it is that new parties require more than a charismatic leader and lashings of sincerity if they are to persuade the voters to part from traditional allegiances. If he carries out the plan which he first announced last year, Sir James could soon be enriching the Treasury to the tune of £325,000 in lost deposits.

Whether it comes to this will partly depend upon whether the two main parties commit themselves to a referendum on Europe before John Major at long last goes to the country. Both the Tories and Labour are edging that way, but not in the unconditional terms which Sir James and his anti-European allies demand. Opinion polls show that three-quarters of the electorate want a referendum, but there is no guarantee whatever that this generalised view would ever translate into general election votes for a party campaigning on this issue alone. It is just possible nevertheless that the Goldsmith Party may have an important marginal effect when the election comes. Supposing that his candidates collect 1,000 votes each — a stiff target which, by way of comparison, only six Green candidates managed in 1992 — they would almost all lose their deposits. Yet, assuming that the Goldsmithites will take votes mainly from the Conservatives, a handful of them might nevertheless swing a cluster of key marginals. Conservative Central Office is right to fear that even a one per cent share for Sir James's candidates could cost them as many as 20 seats — almost enough to put Tony Blair into Downing Street on its own.

It may seem extraordinary that the anti-European right should feel so obsessed with its own correctness that it is prepared to risk the future of the Conservative Party in this way. But then the anti-European right *is* extraordinary. Every time that the opinion polls or the ballot boxes produce proof that the voters dislike a divided and extremist Conservative Party, the right responds by forcing the issue still further. This weekend's opinion polls suggested a strengthening Labour occupation of the political centreground. Yet in response Sir James opens up further divisions, just as Robert Dunn did yesterday in his own part of the forest by insisting on challening Sir Marcus Fox for the chairmanship of the 1922 committee. When such a mood is on a political party, as Labour found between 1979 and 1983, reason barely enters into it.

The squeal of the Stassinopoulos

Arianna ditches Dole. Time for Colin Powell to run for cover

WHO NEEDS enemies if they have friends such as Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington? Such is General Colin Powell's drawing power that he now has Republicans of every variety rallying to his standard. Going by his own strict criteria of amassing overwhelming forces before going in to battle Powell is thought to be close to a decision to seek the Republican nomination to the Presidency. But assuredly the General will not want to count Arianna as one of his assets, even if her husband Michael parts with still more money in pursuit of her ambition to gain a firm footing inside the Oval Office. Last year, the Huffingtons spent almost 30 million dollars on a vain bid to have Michael elected to the Senate.

Now Arianna — once aptly described by this paper's political editor as "the most upwardly mobile Greek since Icarus" — has set herself up to crusade for the Gingrich "revolution" and has anointed Colin Powell as her chosen vessel to usher in a New American Compassion to connect Americans with her "fourth instinct to love and care anew" — and to dismantle the welfare system. As a first step towards attaining this higher state of being, Ms Stassinopoulos seeks the destruction of Senator Robert Dole. She says he is "an emperor without clothes, who is not electable", an ignoramus without proper understanding of the Gingrich revolution. Arianna's assessment of Dole may not be far off the mark, but she seems to have forgotten that the Senator effusively backed her husband's campaign last year when all around her said that even Michael's millions could not make up for his shortcomings. Plainly the "fourth instinct" has nothing to do with loyalty, one of the most prized military values. To Powell Arianna's siren "call to the soul" must sound like nuisance squeal.

Letters to the Editor

Cold comfort for cuddly causes

SO THERE we have it: outrage as the National Lottery Charities Board supports "obscure" causes like refugees, ethnic-minority and drug and alcohol charities (Bottomley rounds on charities, October 23).

Obscure is a euphemism for unpopular. We provide help across England and Scotland for drug misusers and never has it been harder to raise *funds. There is national* breast-beating over drug misuse, yet people will dip into their pockets far more readily for people whose problems are seen to be outside their control. We have therefore traditionally raised money from sources such as charitable trusts but competition is fierce.

The danger that the National Lottery Charities Board capitulates to simplistic arguments between wor*thy and unworthy causes is* great. Let us hope that, rather than bowing to the might of the public-relations departments of self-interested organisations, its integrity and independence can be maintained.
Clare Tickell.
Chief Executive,
Phoenix House,
47-49 Borough High Street,
London SE1 1NB.

FORTUNATELY, the Charities Board seems to be standing firm against the view that well-known or cuddly charities should have pri*ority. Poverty was a courageous* choice of theme, not least because of the sharp contrast to earlier lottery grants, such as for the Churchill papers. Small and local initiatives may be unknown to the chattering classes but they often represent the best means of addressing poverty at a local level by working with, rather than for, local communities. Direct grants to the grassroots has proved in many circumstances to be *highly effective.*
Martin Sime.
Director, Scottish Council
for Voluntary Organisations.
18/19 Claremont Crescent,
Edinburgh EH7 4QD.

CRITICISM of the National Charities Lottery Board should not overshadow the good work of other lottery award boards. The Sports Council Lottery Fund is doing an excellent job. I am the treasurer of a small bowling club in Peterborough and we have won a grant towards the cost of a new pavilion.

The application process was well within the capabili*ties of non-professional fund*raisers. Well-designed forms, comprehensive guidance notes and helpful advice from Sports Council staff enabled our committee to submit a detailed application. I have just received details of a one-day conference (cost £416) where speakers from all five awarding bodies and Camelot will advise would-be applicants. This is unnecessary. Mrs Bottomley should keep a careful watch on private compa*nies in the business of mak*ing a profit from the lottery grant award process.
Alan Johnson.
53 Aster Drive,
Peterborough.

THE number of regular gamblers (ie those who gamble at least once a week) has increased dramatically because Camelot's mass advertising has stimulated a demand that never previously existed. This should be of no surprise as it mirrors other potentially addictive and socially acceptable behaviours such as smoking and drinking.

If the Government wants state-sponsored gambling in the UK, it has a moral responsibility to provide funds towards the help and rehabilitation of such problem gamblers. Such funding could (and perhaps should) be provided by National Lottery profits and given to those organisations helping problem gamblers.
(Dr) Mark Griffiths.
Chair of Trustees,
UK Forum on Young
People and Gambling.
Dept of Social Sciences,
Nottingham Trent
University,
Burton Street,
Nottingham NG1 4BU.

Views of the grand Kenyon

RADIO 3 has sunk to new depths of vulgarity. An advert for its In Tune programme ended with the end of the third movement of Tchaikovsky's Pathétique symphony. The silly pompous march is *not* the end of the symphony but is immediately followed by the despairing finale. Tchaikovsky said that he often wept bitterly while composing it.

I call for the resignation of Nicholas Kenyon and his replacement by a genuine musician.
Robin P M Clarke.
9 Augusta Road, Moseley,
Birmingham B13 8AJ.

AM I alone in being dismayed by the large amount of choral songs and early music now broadcast? On referring to Who's Who, I find Nicholas Kenyon edited a book, Authenticity and Early *Music; and I have been told* that at school he was a choral scholar. Should his own taste dictate an unreasonable quota of this kind of music?
Maurice Hatton.
10 Cambridge Gate,
London NW1 4JX.

THERE is also the degradation of Radio 3's news service. Once it was deeply satisfying to listen to a straightforward presentation of the serious news of the day. Now we have the same tabloid drizzle as every other radio station — Dempsey the bloody dog, OJ's every twitch, the lot. Kenyon has destroyed a unique institution.
Richard Easterbrook.
4 Cypress Tree Close,
Sidcup, Kent.

SIR John Reith said: "He who prides himself on giving what he thinks the public wants is often creating a fictitious demand for lower standards which he will then satisfy." Radio 3 may have a (relatively) small audience but it's been a long time dying.
Dennis Baker.
Penny Barton, Stoke Road,
Taunton TA3 6HN.

WE ARE fed up with all the snobbery. As sixties children, listening to classical music was something we *had* to do; discovering Classic FM has been a revelation. Radio 3 seemed inaccessible compared with the rich variety of music we enjoy on Classic FM. The added bonus is our teenage children, who are seriously into rave, jungle and warehouse music, are often heard humming along to Gorecki, Stravinsky et al.
Michael and Di Nokes.
10 Elsworth Place,
Cambridge CB2 2RG.

Hard to swallow

IN June last year, I was diagnosed with deep vein thrombosis (a blood clot in the leg) and also with suspected pulmonary-embolism — a blood clot in the lungs. I was extremely lucky to survive. I welcome the recent publication of the dangers of the pill.

All the doctors I saw when I began to experience back pain, breathlessness and severe pain in my left leg, which hindered walking, did not — because of my age (then 18) — connect these symptoms with thrombosis, although they were aware that I was on the pill. I was diag*nosed with panic attacks and* sciatica which, as I have since discovered, are common misdiagnoses when thrombosis occurs. Hopefully, with the recent coverage, cases such as mine will be taken more seriously and thrombosis will be diagnosed, and so treated, much quicker.
Lisa Harding.
Northgate Street,
Aberystwyth,
Dyfed SY23 2JS.

WITHIN three hours of receiving the Government's crisis fax, our partner*ship had formed a plan, en*gaged extra staff, contacted its two nearest chemists, and forked out for 500 first-class stamps. By Friday afternoon, an appropriate replacement prescription, with a personal letter of reassurance and instruction to each person concerned, was in the first-class post. The important point, which seems to have been missed in the hullabaloo, is that GPs all around the country are quietly coping whilst those arrangements made by the Department of Health have, by all accounts, been swamped. The cost to our partnership, sadly, has not been limited to the stamps and extra wages: strategy meetings have been missed, irrelevant data has not been collected and NHS Management Executive circulars have been left untranslated.
(Dr) John Maddison.
School Hill House,
Lewes, E Sussex BN7 2LU.

MILLIONS of women on the pill are at risk from venous thrombosis and embolism, heart disease, diabetes, gall-bladder diseases, depression, hypertension, disorders in lipid levels and in the metabolism of carbohydrates.

That women run such risks by interfering with their natural hormone balance is indicative both of the over-emphasis on sex in today's relationships between men and women, and the abiding selfishness of men in laying the burden of family planning on women.
Gustav Schindler.
Alice Shepherd Foundation.
13 Laneside, Chislehurst,
Kent BR7 6BP.

ONCE upon a time there was a group of power-hungry bully boys in the health service who set an impossible task for their minions: to halve the teenage pregnancy rate by the year 2000. Amazingly, the teenage pregnancy rate in Britain — seven times higher than the Dutch counterpart — by 1995 was at last starting to fall. The bully boys must have started to panic: we can't let these professional do-gooders gloat; we must put a spanner in the works.

And that is just what they did last week — another "pill scare". What hope is there now for reducing unwanted teenage pregnancy?
(Dr) Helena Rockett.
High Street,
Stonebroom,
Derbyshire DE55 6JT.

One of us

CHARLES Moore (Interview, October 21) looks like a pillar of the High Tory establishment, but in fact his deepest roots lie in liberal nonconformity — the same tradition that produced the Manchester Guardian.

His great-grandfather, Sir Norman Moore, went to Castle Howell School, Lancaster, the Dartington Hall of its day. In 1880 he married Amy, daughter of William Leigh Smith, who was the brother of Barbara Bodichon, pioneer feminist and co-founder of Girton College, Cambridge, and first cousin to Florence *Nightingale. William's father* and grandfather were both MPs, radical in politics and Unitarian in religion. The grandfather, William Smith (1756-1835), who sat in the Commons for 46 years and became the Father of the House, was a champion of civil and religious liberty and chairman of the Anti-Slavery Society. His activities brought him considerable unpopularity but, in the end, much respect. "Few public men," wrote his biographer, "at the commencement of their careers have encountered more of the world's obloquy; no man has lived to vindicate at last a higher character and a purer fame."

Could there still be hope for Charles Moore?
Jeremy Goring.
12 Keere Street,
Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1TY.

Kids the losers on the game

I READ with interest the Children's Society report on child prostitution (Church wants law eased to help child prostitutes, October 18). On moral grounds one cannot disagree *with the argument* for decriminalising prostitution for the under-18s. It is not right to punish these children. They are clearly not criminals. They are the victims of abuse and exploitation and should be treated as such.

What is also needed urgently is to bring to justice the pimps and the punters. There are laws in force which can be used to stop these people, but in reality little is done. In 1993, 107 people were tried for the offence of living off immoral earnings in the whole of England and Wales. Only 49 were found guilty.

Successful conviction seems to pivot around the need for the exploited child to give evidence against the pimp. It must be obvious to all that this is a non-starter. There should be other ways of stopping these evil people. One should never forget that under the "streetwise" appearance of the 14-year-old prostitute lies a frightened child who has just somehow *got lost along the way.*
Irene Ivison.
Address supplied.

Trial by tabloid

BEING what is known as a "poncy, lefty Guardian reader" in this institution, I have observed that 95 per cent of inmates read the Sun. Might I suggest to Michael Howard that anybody known to be a Sun reader is jailed. This way 95 per cent of crime would not be committed, Murdoch would become less of a threat and a party with a more sensible approach to crime will win the next general *election.*
Dave Poole.
A Wing, HM Prison Lewes,
Lewes, E Sussex BN7 1EA.

Father figures

YOUR report that European employers and unions are about to reach agreement on parental leave (Tories face new EU snag, October 23) should be put into perspec*tive. Parental leave should be* seen as part of a much broader strategy for increasing men's participation in the care and upbringing of children. The UK government has made a commitment to act to support more equal sharing of family responsibilities through its adoption of the Council of Ministers recommendation of March 1992. So far it has done nothing to honour that commitment.

In the UK, where fathers still work the longest hours in the EU, the need to pay attention to their roles as carers becomes daily more pressing. A right to parental and paternity leave would be welcome signs.
Peter Moss.
Coordinator,
EC Childcare Network.
27/28 Woburn Square,
London WC1H 0AA.

A Country Diary

CHESHIRE: Each time I walk along the riverside path towards the site where the autumn crocus (crocus nudiflora) grows I am reminded of an article I read some years ago about now the plant could have reached this area of Cheshire from its native home in the Pyrenees of northern Spain and southern France. It was suggested that it arrived here at the time of the Crusades, with the knights returning from the holy wars who would have understood its culinary uses as well as its importance as a herbal remedy. In the 12th century these returning soldier-monks were granted vast estates with one group in particular — the Knights of St John of Jerusalem — owning large areas of land around Manchester and the nearby River Mersey, into which our local river flows. The plant's *stronghold* is here in the north west and many of the best-known sites are on land once owned by the Knights of St John. Although I liked the idea of the local site having such a historical background, I always felt it was too remote from the main colonies.

However this year I have traced a connection closer to home. While researching a local history project I found reference in a Victorian history of the parish to one of the ancient estates having changed ownership at the time of the Crusades.

In a charter dated c1150, the Lord of the Manor granted the land to "St John the Baptist and the holy hospital of Jerusalem" — the Knights of St John. So, perhaps the autumn crocus that appears each year on the riverbank in the valley can trace its ancestors back to the Pyrenees. We shall never know, but its entry in Newton's Flora of Cheshire states that the site is "amongst indigenous vegetation well above flood level", an acknowledgement of its wild origins.

J M THOMPSON

Diary

Matthew Norman

WITH the Budget approaching and the seasonal aroma of tax cuts in the air, a fascinating insight into the Chancellor's way of thinking comes today from an unlikely source. In the new Radio Times, Paul Eddington tells the magazine's excellent interviewer Andrew Duncan about his friendship with that noblest of Lords, Archer of Weston-super-Mare. Remember, please, that this is the actor's account, not his Lordship's, when doling out credence. Mr Eddington recalls how, at an Archer lunch a few years ago, several Cabinet ministers were discussing taxation. Mr Eddington, always a vociferous opponent of Thatcherism, chipped in. "I said, 'I'd willingly pay more if it would get rid of those poor vagrants in cardboard boxes.' I thought the ceiling would fall. One or two chairs scraped back as they looked at this strange creature." Never mind chair-scraping, poor old Squeegee Straw would faint at such dangerous radicalism. But what of the Chancellor himself? Mr Eddington continues: "And then Kenneth Clarke said, 'How right you are. We all feel exactly the same.' " Indeed we all do, and we all look forward immensely to the requisite tax hike next month.

NEWLY published is Oceans of Consolation, a book about Irish migration to Australia. Those asking for a copy in the Dillons bookshop next to London University have been mystified by the direction. "That's not in this section, sir," a shop assistant explained yesterday. "You'll find it in our Third World section."

CAN anyone settle an argument about the Environment Secretary's commercial value? A caller to the Tory Central Office library yesterday was told that the fee for a copy of Little Gum Gum's speech to the Blackpool conference would be £5, payable up front. Meanwhile, the Department of the Environment later promised to supply the man with the speech for a more competitive £0.00. This lack of co-ordination is distressing, and demands the urgent attention of the Deputy Prime Minister, First Secretary of State's centralised computer. But who is right? Is Gum Gum worth a fiver, or nothing at all? Or is his price, as the Diary believes, beyond rubies (and freebie garden ponds)?

CUNNING advice on pensions comes from a new TUC factsheet. "You draw your pension from the scheme you left it in either at state pension age," counsels the document, "when you die, or when you retire from your new scheme."

NICK Leeson, it is reported, will earn up to £3 million from a film of his life, in which he is to be played by Hugh Grant. Meanwhile, in other doppleganger castings rumoured to be on the cards, Jessica Lange will play the eponymous heroine of The Life Of Thora Hird; Tom Cruise is to star in The Arthur Mullard Story; and Julian Clary has been signed up to portray the late Wilfred Brambell in a Galton and Simpson biopic. Meanwhile, casting problems plague the five-minute short provisonally titled Michael Winner: The Making Of His Greatest Movies. In the absence (for obvious reasons) of Margaret Rutherford, the producers are looking to Japan, where the search for a white-haired Sumo with a blue rinse has yet to yield any results.

IN Liverpool, the catchily named Willy Russell Centre for Children and Adults Who Stammer has begun a fight — a fight of an importance it would be folly to underestimate. Speech therapists there are taking on the cartoon character Porky Pig, who himself suffers from a mild stammer (notably at the end of cartoons). "Porky Pig certainly sets a bad example," says the Centre's Mary Collings, "and bullies use things like that to pick on children." Warner Brothers, the cartoon's maker, refuses to comment. So do I, for there is no more space. As Porky would put it, "Th-th-th-that's all folks!"

No jesters welcome in this court

Commentary

Hugo Young

ONE day last week, the European Court of Justice ruled that it was unlawful to discriminate in favour of women by applying job-quotas which gave them an advantage over men. This decision, where it was noticed at all, was welcomed in the British media as wisdom of which Solon himself would have been proud. Next day, the same court said it was unlawful for men not to be eligible for free medical prescriptions at the same age as women, a decision rectifying discrimination against men between 60 and 64, which will cost the British taxpayer £30 million a year. This decision was depicted as the work of foreign judges unconscionably meddling with the sacred right of British politicians to exercise national sovereignty over the shape of the welfare state.

The first case originated in Germany, and happened to reach a conclusion that reflected the present state of British law. The second case, brought by an Englishman, overturned British law. But both cases were held in a court of which Britain became a signed-up, and presumably law-abiding, supporter from the moment she entered the European Community. The court is the forum for an objective contest where, as in every such court, you win some, you lose some. Only in Britain, however, is defeat on a level playing-field followed by suggestions that the result should be rejected and the referee, if possible, shot. That has become the standard reaction to ECJ judgments that interfere with British practice, and takes its place in the catalogue of crudities that now passes for serious Euro-sceptic argument.

It is replicated in the Cabinet. Some ministers not only believe that the Court is the fount of most Euro-evil but that, with one gesture from his unbending finger, Mr Major can demolish its pretensions at next year's Inter-Governmental Conference. But that is not the universal or even the majority opinion. It turns out not to be the line the Government has decided to take. In a swelling sea of scepticism, let not this moment pass before it drowns.

It is being registered this week by David Davis, the Foreign Office minister who sits as the British representative on the EU Reflection Group, preparing for the IGC. The British line, casting doubt on Portilloite times, is that nothing much can or should be done about the Court. Mr Davis has suggested to the Group that the retrospective effects of its judgments might be curtailed, and that the damages available for failures to observe EU law should be confined to major breaches, thus excluding the minor peccadilloes of governments. But Britain declines to make a frontal challenge to the ECJ, or get anywhere near the extremes of phobic demand and threaten to withdraw from it.

This is in one sense elementary, in another startling. It is elementary, because the court is the rule-policing, sometimes rule-making, body the EU has always had and can never do without. The Government has an interest in making sure the laws are equally obeyed by all. But the decision is impressive, all the same, because the court's power is massive and expanding. While political federalism is restrained, and even regressing, judicial federalism has become a reality.

Over the years, the court has extended its range. It made itself into a constitutional court, judging the legitimacy of national laws against Community laws and ensuring the supremacy of the latter. This was not originally its stated remit. But for 30 years it has been the agent of sovereignty-curtailment, acquiring for itself some of the attributes of the US Supreme Court in a way the member-states have seldom contested. Unelected and unaccountable, it is, for all its judicial solemnity, a body ripe for the de-constructive rage of those, including many in the British Conservative Party, who believe "Europe" must be reversed.

What the Government is quietly admitting is that the court is not only central but, in its crucial work, probably unchallengeable. Its federalising record is built permanently into the structure. As Aidan O'Neill writes in his penetrating study, Decisions Of The ECJ And Their Constitutional Implications (Butterworths 1994): "It would appear that the only way in which Member States could legally or practically pull back the court from its current position is by rescinding the Treaty of Rome in its entirety, dissolving the whole structure of the European Communities, abolishing its institutions, and beginning the whole European project again.

That is the scale of the enterprise on which Euro-phobism is, at bottom, compelled to be engaged. Understandably, it has somewhat deranging effects. These go beyond the fantasy of withdrawing from the ECJ, or psyching up the country against the menace of a European Army that doesn't exist. They are now surfacing in Sir James Goldsmith's proposal of himself as the Ross Perot of the British polity, preparing to finance a party whose main purpose is to threaten mainline party politicians with defeat unless they commit themselves to the anti-parliamentary device of a referendum om Europe.

> The Goldsmith plan is political unreality. The richer you are, the crazier you get

This project is shrouded in several mysteries. Some say that what Goldsmith seeks is a manifesto promise from all three parties of a referendum both on the IGC outcome and on the single currency. Others say that individual politicians will be targeted. Unless they sign the pledge they can expect, like Kenneth Clarke, the arrival of Sir Alan Walters, or some other exile in the Goldsmith mould, zealous for a sovereign Britain, to take away their majority. Looming over these uncertainties is the larger contradiction, between Goldsmith, a protectionist and ultra-Gaullist who believes in Europe as long as he/we are running it, and the free-trading, anti-German Thatcherites who have been making the case for a referendum from within the party Goldsmith now wants to challenge.

The most striking aspect of the Goldsmith plan is its political unreality. The richer you are, the crazier you get. Quite apart from the pathetic fate that always awaits fourth parties in British general elections, who is this enterprise meant to serve? If Screaming Lord Jimmy could get enough candidates into the field, it is conceivable that a handful might seal the fate of Conservative MPs in tight marginals where a few hundred votes made the difference. Perhaps the threat of this would be enough to secure some kind of contingent party pledge to a referendum in exchange for rather less of the Goldsmith fortune than it would take to found a new party in 650 seats. Otherwise, perversity rules, as the anti-Brussels party is assisted towards oblivion.

Meanwhile, the real world moves on: or at least declines to go into reverse. The European Court of Justice is the real world, and the Government, behind some modestly crackling static, has decided to recognise it as such. This won't be the whole story of the IGC, where much pre-election posturing awaits. But it tells us that sanity, however shamefully, still prevails among governing men.

The message is the medium is the message

Catherine Bennett

WE ARE wholeheartedly behind condom machines, and dubious about the royal family. We support legal abortion and disapprove of castrating sex offenders. For these precious insights into the mind of the common British hack, we are indebted to the London College of Printing, and its "first ever in-depth study of British journalists".

More revelations are promised when the college completes its analysis of 726 interviews. As one of the subjects of these lengthy telephone quizzes, I am relieved to hear that my somewhat over-hasty answer to the castration question did not skew the results. But then, one is rarely required to supply an instant opinion, or (more likely) mischievous retort, to such posers, and the probings of the college's interviewer took me aback. As he persisted with some intimate queries about smoking, drinking and marital status, it was difficult to see how my, or anyone else's, answers could throw light on the quality or the behaviour of the British media.

What useful conclusion can be drawn from our collective attachment to contraceptive vending machines? Perhaps, it will be argued, the expense of buying all these condoms accounts for the enormous salaries now demanded by successful media executives. Maybe we're so busy indulging in safe sex that we have no energy left over for reporting.

The fatuity of such information will not stop it being enthusiastically analysed in the media, where the decline of investigative or campaigning journalism has coincided with the transformation of trade gossip into news stories, features, hour-long radio and television programmes. If you miss the Guardian media pages on Monday, you can catch up on Wednesday night with BBC2's The Spin, or on Sunday morning with Radio 4's Mediumwave. In newspapers, industry hearsay and comment has escaped from its confinement in media sections, and now rampages through mainstream news and feature pages, for all the world as if it really mattered. Over the weekend, Observer readers were treated to a substantial study of Tina Brown, said to be making herself unpopular in New York. The Times presented an expanded obituary-feature on the life and times of Michael Vermeulen, the late editor of GQ magazine. Then there were pressing updates on the appointment of new editors at the Daily and Sunday Telegraphs. No one can say, as yet, what the installation of Charles Moore will mean for the world, for Britain, or even for the Daily Telegraph; but it still provided the Sunday Times with a full page of gripping analysis, opening with the kind of actualité-packed introduction it once reserved for full-scale Insight investigations: "Conrad Black, the tough-talking Canadian, sat back in his chair and looked directly into the eyes of the man known to his detractors as Lord Snooty."

In theory, the examination of media conduct is a deserving enough enterprise. There are worthy questions of probity and privacy, of monopolies and malpractice. But they're not going to be asked by one journalist of another, are they? In the tiny, overlapping world of print and broadcast media, no one wants to discountenance a friend or offend a prospective employer, which explains why the tone of media interviews usually hovers somewhere between the jocular and the wry.

Every industry has its own trade journal, and it is understandable that journalists will tend to treat their newspapers as the parish pump. They may, for example, genuinely believe that all women readers will rejoice in the existence of Women in Journalism, Eve Pollard's campaigning luncheon club. On the other hand, the unnatural prominence awarded to such industry ephemera can only foster the delusion, shared by almost 33,000 university applicants this year, that the media merit serious study. Overwhelmed by consumer demand, Westminister University plans to expand into a new £30 million department in Harrow, the "biggest media studies centre in Europe".

ASKED to explain what will actually be taught in the centre, Westminster's principal lecturer, David Cardiff, recently spoke learnedly about the analysis of soap operas as a form of American cultural imperialism. Media studies, he asserted, "are just as important as English literature and probably more directly important in the modern world".

Urged on by the Rupert Murdoch Professor of Language and Communication, the Oxford English Faculty is moving towards the same dismal conclusion. A new "language, media and film" option for English undergraduates will permit, we are told, "a rigorous examination of almost anything".

So there it is; where once philosophy was thought to be the discipline of all disciplines, now it's media studies that soars above the rest. No wonder we pay ourselves so much attention.

Play the game

Tomorrow, Camelot will come under fire in a Commons debate. **Alex Brummer** defends its performance; and below, **Martin Wainwright** is awed by his quango's effectiveness

YOU DON'T have to be a Brookside viewer — the current storyline is a falling-out among neighbours over a £100,000 lottery windfall — to know that the National Lottery is a source of bad blood. Just as it has divided prizewinning families, it has split the arts world over whether Sadler's Wells is more deserving than community theatre in Newcastle, or Barnardo's needs the charities' moneys more than recently arrived refugees from Eritrea.

Moreover, the success which Camelot, the lottery operator, has achieved in garnering funds from the British has been divisive in business too. It has brought attacks not only from losing lottery bidders such as Richard Branson, but also from pools operators like Littlewoods and betting chains like Ladbroke, which see Camelot as an unfair operator because of its monopoly power. The executives who run Camelot — chief executive Tim Holley and chairman Sir George Russell — have few friends for their generous bonus schemes. Like the utility executives, they have been cast as "fat cats", making them easy meat for tabloids feeding off class jealousy.

But despite all Richard Branson's whinges, Camelot has done a remarkable job. It could be regarded as the most robustly successful launch in Government-sponsored British commerce: consider the early disasters of some television franchises such as TV-am, Britain's pathetic attempt to build its own micro-chip through Inmos, and the debt-ridden Channel Tunnel.

In the eyes of its critics, Camelot has been viewed — as Roy Thomson saw the first commercial television franchises — as a "licence to print money". However, in terms of the return on turnover, the profits of Camelot are likely to be remarkably modest given the amounts of money generated. In its first six months, Camelot's profits were £6.3 millions after tax (net), around 0.5 per cent of turnover. In a full year the National Lottery could take nearly £4 billion. If the margin were to double to one per cent, this would still mean profits of only £40 million. This sum is dwarfed by the returns, for instance, on running the National Grid, which could generate £3 to £5 billion for its owners.

Far from being a collection of get-rich-quick merchants with friends in high places, as some have argued, the Camelot consortium almost certainly was the best qualified. It brought together the skills of a group of market leaders: the confectionery company Cadbury Schweppes with tremendous distribution experience among smaller retailers; the printing company De La Rue, world leader in high-technology security printing; the telecommunciations experts Racal, as well as US lottery practitioners.

Impressively, this group took the National Lottery off the drawing board at the end of May 1994, when it won its seven-year licence, and had it running by November. There were no delays because of faulty Japanese digging equipment; because the computer software had gone wrong (as with the Stock Exchange settlement system), or because not enough outlets had been signed up to make it a viable proposition. It carried out its mandate as required and with a great deal of aplomb. There can be complaints about the nature of the promotions, the morality of scratch cards and the way the prizes have been distributed — but that has little to do with the efficiency of an operation which has allowed millions to play the game each week.

The inner workings of Camelot, although partly covered by the rules of the Stock Exchange (as several of its owners are public companies), should, however, be open to maximum public disclosure. A Government which allows the public to read the minutes of the sensitive meetings between the Chancellor and the Governor of the Bank of England should plainly not be hiding Camelot's affairs as Mrs Bottomley's National Heritage department is seeking to do. Camelot and the boards which dish out the proceeds of the lottery should not be shielded from the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee or the National Audit Office.

It is not a question of whether the lottery is well audited: the issue is one of public access and maximum exposure. Camelot has delivered the service it was hired to provide. Unlike the Richard Branson bid, it is not itself responsible for assessing which charities receive funds. If that system needs reform then it should be a matter for the Commons. But this is not a case against a privately run lottery.

Why this lottery board is a good cause

THERE has never before been a beast like the National Lottery Charities Board. Rowntree, Barings, even Carnegie fortunes pale by comparison with the funds made so suddenly available via Anthea, Mystic Meg and their hurtling, pastel-coloured balls. £300 million a year, and rising. Like the rhinoceros imported from Africa to amuse a medieval Pope, the size and novelty of the hoard attracts an inevitable mixture of wonderment and alarm.

Good causes' greatest funding boost of the century? The patron of a ragbag of the undeserving politically correct? Whatever your view, the board's arrival has made charity topical and hoicked it from the "nice but boring" pigeon-hole. As my Yorkshire NLCB colleagues and I discovered yesterday — unnervingly for a reporter — we are The News.

So which is winning within the great beast's entrails, wonderment or alarm? After months of the grant-making process, and over a year of outside carping and (in Virginia Bottomley's accurate word) whinging, every fellow-quangocrat I've met is squarely on the wonderment side. The lottery itself may be little more than a scam (or, alternatively, a marvellous proof that hope really doth spring eternal in the human breast). But the mechanism devised for donating its golden rain to the "charitable, benevolent and philanthropic groups helping those at most disadvantage in society" is proving robust and clear.

Far from being a bizarre windfall, it also offers a future, well-organised, strategic hand for Britain's other grant-makers and grant-seekers, from local Let's Knit for Bosnia groups to the powerful but often competing systems of the big charities. The nastiest side of Lottery Mania, venomously stoked by the Mail, Express and company, has been the attempt to set one good cause against another. Now the dust is settling, the NLCB has the size, clout and systems to encourage exactly the opposite.

Its theming and adoption of a series of priorities, wilfully misinterpreted to begin with (there never was and never will be any exclusion of medical research or the deaf), is probably the most powerful mechanism. Without it, the whole operation would have been buried by demand. With all our 1,205 Yorkshire applicants conforming to the first round's poverty theme (most of those assessed to a superbly high standard), we already have £152 million worth of requests for our £11 million pot.

The theme and its sequels — including the health, care and disability round next spring — have been decided after intensive and thoughtful consultations. Neither I nor my panel is elected (or paid) and we will happily give way to others as time, tide and changing priorities demand. But the board's choice of themes rests on taking voluntary-sector opinion.

This, the whingers and carpers have very slowly come to realise, is why David Sieff and Co have been so sure of their ground and certain of the policy erected on it. And that is reflected in turn in the clarity of both the application pack and the manual for assessors — the workface inspectors who grade projects against the board's criteria.

The whole compilation of "*informed* choice", the modern world's improvement on basic democracy, is next submitted to a computer system, which is also proving its worth. When our panel first met in York, a smart, baggy-trousered young exec from the NLCB's expensive systems consultants — a type we naturally wanted to loathe — did a masterly explanation of how the various weightings were designed; and when the data from the assessors was fed in, the number-crunching more-or-less worked. I say more-or-less, because the cream on our Yorkshire cake was a data puzzle at our final, grant-making meeting, which required a rapid, manual takeover of the final sorting (much in the style of Apollo 13, which I'd seen the night before). This proved the worth of the final piece in the jigsaw: the sheer quality of the volunteer regional advisory panels. Yorkshire alone has the director of the biggest Rowntree trust, the country's leading expert on funder-/finder matching and a national authority on low pay. The animal is eager to spread all this experience, which could be worth more than its actual money.

Yes, the Pope's rhinoceros was sunk in a storm en route for the Holy See. But the National Lottery Charities Board will not go under.

Martin Wainwright, the Guardian's Northern Editor, is chairman of the NLCB's Yorkshire & Humberside advisory panel.

GET YOUR PROFITS ON LINE

electronic commerce 95.
@barbican.31oct/2nov
http://www.netresource.com/ec
$Seventequals.netprofit££

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN PROFIT FROM VISITING ELECTRONIC COMMERCE 95

The only event to offer an overview of the latest products, services & suppliers from leading manufacturers and industry associations with seminar sessions... FREE advice... workshops... demonstrations... product launches...

FAX THIS FORM BACK TO SANDRA PARTINGTON NOW
Fax: 0181 332 0874
Telephone: 0181 332 0044
E-Mail: ec95@touchstone.win-uk.net

NAME
COMPANY
TEL

☐ Yes, please send me complimentary tickets
☐ Yes, please contact me immediately about exhibiting
☐ Yes, please send me information on visiting
☐ Yes, please send me information on the seminar programme

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE 95

BARBICAN CENTRE • 31st OCTOBER - 2nd NOVEMBER 1995
Touchstone Exhibitions & Conferences Ltd., 4 Red Lion St. Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1RW.

If you're involved in:
INTERNET. WWW.VANS.E-MAIL.ISDN.EDI. PRODUCT NUMBERING.ONLINE PUBLISHING. TELECOMS.SOFTWARE.
Put the dates in your diary NOW!

Gavin Ewart

An exuberant subversive

GAVIN EWART, who has died aged 79, was one of the most prolific English poets of the century, and this despite a silent period of some 25 years. He was also one of the most engaging, both on the page and in person — warm, witty, various, funny (though not frivolous), and deeply humane.

Although a thirties poet, there was nothing grand about Gavin. Because of his gift for friendliness and his exuberant subversion of literary propriety, he seemed a contemporary to a generation of poets who were half his age.

Gavin Ewart was educated at Wellington school and Cambridge university — though anyone less influenced by Leavis would be hard to imagine. He developed his poetic talent early and had poems published in New Verse magazine and the Listener when he was 17. His first collection, Poems And Songs, was published in the year that war broke out.

He served in the Royal Artillery from 1940 to 46 — his experiences forming the subject of several later poems — and on his return to civilian life, worked for the British Council before going into advertising:

"Advertising. Advertising. Fatal Lady of the Lake!
No one opts for copyrighting, they get in there by mistake."

To all intents and purposes, he entered poetic oblivion. The renascence, when it came, was explosive; The Pleasures Of The Flesh (1966) being followed by a bibliographer's nightmare of publications, culminating in two massive Collecteds — 1983-85, and 1980-90. Ewart brought to poetry the ability to see that any number of emperors were walking about in the altogether, and that many of the poor, strutting creatures had growing hard-ons:

"Erectile tissue loves to stand erect".

And it was with the embarrassed acceptance of the realities of life, especially with reference to sex, that Ewart shocked.

"Hands that wiped arses
are holding glasses,
lips that fellated
are intoxicated",

is the memorable opening to one among dozens of unabashed poems about being truly human.

But although he wrote easily, fluently and funnily about the 20th century's favourite pastime, Ewart did not have a one-track mind. War, death (an increasing preoccupation in later years), religion, cricket, history and the literary world were all subjected to Ewart's acid directness. Also politics. At the time of Sir John Betjeman's death, in 1984, Ewart's was one of the many names bandied about as a possible successor as Poet Laureate. He was obviously too radical — too rude — to be a serious consideration. But, in fact, he was the unofficial laureate of the Thatcher years (and beyond), Mrs Thatcher herself described gloriously as, "a fake-lady bossyboots from Grantham". His own politics were liberal leftwing, anti-authoritarian, anti-privilege but always with a fine dash of independence. He was the last person to bow to the storm of political correctness:

"American fatties are
wonderful people, they
take up two seats in a
train or a bus . . .".

He was a disciple of Auden ("best poet since Pope"), but although he produced a *"wonderful hybrid rose that crossed the comic with the tragic"*, the resulting poetry was very different. Ewart had nothing of Auden's magisterial authority, and no time for philosophical abstractions. Rather, he was a completely unbuttoned companionable poet in the mode of the mature Byron. Nothing was too inconsequential for his muse, or to share with his readers. This led some to write him off as lightweight, but every poem was instinct with a clubbable humanity. Although his preparedness to experiment in form was as great as Auden's, his was a more casual relationship, resulting in a string of "So-Called Sonnets" and other poems that ambled semi-iambically through the gist of what he had to say. But if he left no undisputedly great individual poems, the effect of his work in its generous plenitude is striking, and deserves to be long kept in print. Although there is a case for a substantial Selected Poems, it is to be hoped that his publishers, Hutchinson, will keep the two Collecteds in print for the forseeable future.

Gavin was a wonderful reader of his own work, performing on the circuit long after most poets hang up their boots. The contrast between his slightly old-world delivery and the sometimes scabrous contents of the poems produced a special frisson. He also tutored on many writing courses, and was a tireless correspondent and sender of postcards. These would arrive in re-cycled envelopes, as often as not marked with a Biro'd message about saving trees, written out in his small neat handwriting.

In addition to writing adult poetry, he was also a children's writer, an anthologist, a reviewer and a librettist. He was chairman of the Poetry Society from 1978 to 1979.

Gavin Ewart will be widely missed by his readers, and long mourned by all who knew him personally. He leaves a wife, Margo Bennett, and two children, Jane and Julian.

Simon Rae

Gavin Buchanan Ewart, born February 4, 1916; died October 23, 1995

An appreciation by Peter Porter will follow.

Gavin Ewart . . . he was considered to radical, or too rude, to be a suitable Poet Laureate

PHOTOGRAPH: PETER JOHNS

Maxene Andrews

One of a three-part harmony

THE death of Maxene Andrews from a heart attack at the age of 79, has effectively ended the Andrews Sisters' career in entertainment. Although one of the trio, LaVerne, died nearly 30 years ago, with Maxene still working, it was possible to work up a passable imitation of the old act. But Maxene was essential to the equation.

Although the group numbered its followers in millions, it was always Maxene that you found yourself watching. With her intense relish for the job in hand, with her patent belief in the reality of the boogie-woogie bugle boy and the pistol-packing mama, she magnetised your attention to such a degree that I have often wondered whether the money was split three ways or whether Maxene took the perks of a senior partner.

One unusual thing about the Andrews Sisters is that they really were sisters. Born in Minneapolis of a Norwegian mother and a Greek father, it was their destiny to become the All-American act of their time. LaVerne was born in 1915, Maxene in 1916 and Patti in 1920.

It appears that all the three girls ever did was sing. Even as children they were learning harmonies, and as adolescents were winning amateur contests all over the middle west. Although there is no recorded evidence, it is almost certain that their style was already recognisable. What gave them the edge over their professional rivals was an unshakeable rhythmic solidity. The three girls phrased like one, and although they learned their orchestrations by heart, they were able to create the benign effect of improvisation, swinging very hard no matter what the orchestral backing might be.

The first time they appeared on the professional map was in 1932, when they toured the vaudeville circuits as part of the Larry Rich band. Later they joined the orchestra of Leon Belasco, who, like a great many bandleaders, was in the wrong profession. His eagerness to please caused one critic to describe his antics as those of, "a molested moth trying to find a place to alight".

It was during the Belasco period, in 1937, that the sisters recorded the song which made them famous overnight. This was "Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen" a freakish example of a popular song, adored by millions who didn't understand the words. From this moment, the future of the group was assured, with their recordings selling in millions and their screen appearances often saving some turgid comedy.

That the peak of their popularity should have coincided so exactly with the entry of America into the war, meant that, to this day, the sight and sound of the three girls symbolises, for a whole generation, the first half of the 1940s. One of their biggest successes was the military nonsense song, Boogie-woogie Bugle Boy of Company B, and if most of its words were gibberish, the rhythmic animation carried with it all the world's jitterbugs. It was mainly due to their recording that the first world war relic: Oh Johnnie, Oh Johnnie, Oh, enjoyed a new lease of life. One of their most successful discs was of the pains of parting: I'll Be With You In Apple Blossom Time, and there was a very successful recording partnership with Bing Crosby.

After the war, with the dramatic amendments to the popular music landscape, they gradually drifted into retirement, although Patti worked as a single act. The trio was then rediscovered by television, but the death in 1967 of LaVerne, caused the group to retire once more. Attempts were made to find a substitute for LaVerne, but none succeeded.

A revival of interest came from an unexpected quarter. In 1973, Bette Midler's record hit of Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy aped the Andrews Sisters version so exactly as to bring about a revival of interest in their work. Within a year, Patti and Maxene were starring on Broadway in a revue called Over Here, an ingenious attempt to create the illusion that the world had returned to the 1940s.

The most surprising event came in 1985 when Maxene recorded a solo album, of which half the contents were old Andrews Sisters favourites. The enterprise turned out to be a modest failure, largely because of Maxene's voice, which sounded a shade too harsh to be effective. Even the tracks where she tried to revive the effect of the trio, by dubbing her own harmonies, were no more than sad reminders of the original sound. The evidence of this album, added to the failure to find a replacement for LaVerne, suggests that the sum of the trio was far greater than its parts, and that by some colossal stroke of fortune, the voices of the three sisters exactly complemented each other to form the perfect blend.

In a career extended over half a century, the trio recorded about 1,800 songs; are said to have sold 75,000,000 records, and appeared in 21 movies. But they will be best remembered for a few enormous hits, for their uniformed wartime image, and for Maxene, having the time of her life.

Benny Green

Maxene Andrews, singer, born January 3, probably 1916; died October 21, 1995

Irrepressible sisters . . . Maxene, Patty and LaVerne

HULTON DEUTSCH

John Pollock

Man of Ayrshire

JOHN POLLOCK, who has died aged 69, was a towering figure in the Scottish Labour movement. Uniquely, he was twice chairman of the Labour Party's Scottish Council and also served as president of the STUC. And he transformed the Educational Institute Of Scotland, which he served as general secretary between 1974 and 1988, from a professional association into an effective trade union.

Born into a Kilmarnock Independent Labour Party family, Pollock's politics developed in the 1950s and 1960s in the Ayrshire Federation of Labour, then a policy-making body for the progressive Ayrshire County Council. Equality of educational opportunity was his priority, both politically and professionally. He began teaching in 1951 and established a national reputation, between 1965-74, as rector of Ayr's Mainholm Academy. His love of the Scottish outdoors was passed on to his pupils and he was a believer in the distinctiveness of the Scottish educational system.

When Emrys Hughes, the MP for South Ayrshire, died in 1970, it was widely expected that John would inherit the seat. But he had said he wasn't interested in a Westminster career, and did not seek the nomination, which went to his protégé, Jim Sillars, who later sought to split the Labour Party in Scotland on the constitutional issue and finally ended up in the Scottish Nationalist Party.

Pollock's grounding in Ayrshire politics and fluency of language made him a powerful orator. He would have held ministerial office and the last 25 years in Scottish politics would have been markedly different if he had run in that 1970 byelection.

The Ayrshire Federation of Labour had been an early bastion of support for Scottish home rule. Initially John had opposed this policy but by the 1970s he had become one of its most ardent proponents within the Labour Party.

When John joined the Educational Institute of Scotland as general secretary, the crucial decision to affiliate to the STUC had already been taken. But its refashioning as a trade union, far from averse to militant action, was largely his work. He was soon leading a work-to-rule on conditions of service, in which Willie Ross his friend and fellow-Ayrshireman who became Secretary of State for Scotland was his main adversary. This was the era of the Houghton and Clegg reports on teachers' pay and John Pollock played a key part, in the wider British context, in ensuring that their recommendations were translated into the most significant post-war improvements in the profession's pay and conditions.

In the mid-1980s, he again led Scottish teachers into industrial action, this time against a Tory government. The key demand was for an independent pay review which Malcolm Rifkind, as Scottish Secretary, was forced to concede. At a time when the labour movement won few victories, it was a remarkable success. Rifkind's intransigence in the face of Pollock's eloquence and the reasonableness of his demand played no small part in the Tories' decline in Scotland during the 1980s.

He brought boundless enthusiasm and clear thinking to other areas of public life including membership of the Forestry Commissions, the Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Broadcasting Council for Scotland.

I last saw John Pollock earlier this year when he proposed the toast to the immortal memory of Robert Burns, at a Labour club in my constituency. As would be expected of such a distinguished Ayrshireman, he was a genuine expert on Burns. He also epitomised the poet's most fundamental statement of belief: "The rank is but the guinea stamp; the man's the gowd, for a' that."

Brian Wilson

John Pollock, labour movement activist, born April 21, 1926; died October 20, 1995

Birthdays

Sir John Adye, director, GCHQ, 56; Phil Bennett, rugby player, 47; Luciano Berio, conductor, composer, 70; Ian Bishop, West Indian cricketer, 28; Barry Davies, sports commentator, 55; Sir Robin Day, doyenne of interviewers, 72; Frank Delaney, writer and broadcaster, 53; Prof Peter Gellhorn, composer, conductor, 83; Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon, Chief of the Air Staff, 57; Sir Ralph Halpern, chairman, British Fashion Council, 57; Sena Jurinac, soprano, 74; Kevin Kline, actor, 48; Reg Kray, gangland criminal, 62; Sir Fred Pontin, holiday camp founder, 89; Piers Rodgers, secretary, Royal Academy of Arts, 51; Sir Robert Sainsbury, grocer, 89; Jane Stern, American writer, 49; Mark Tulley, former BBC correspondent, India, 60; Malcolm Turnbull, Spycatcher lawyer, chairman of Australia's Republic Advisory Committee, 41; Paul Vaughan, radio journalist, 70; Bill Wyman, ex-Rolling Stone, 54.

Death Notices

DOBSON. On 18th October, peacefully at Lakeside Nursing Home, Aylesbury, Richard William Dobson, aged 79 years. Flight Lieutenant Navigator, 192 squadron, R.A.F 1942 to 1946 and for fifty years, Pharmacist of Eccles, Lancashire. Beloved husband of the late Edna, father of Roger and Susan and grandfather of Matthew, Alexandra, Jonathan, Richard, Edward and Philip. Funeral on Monday 30th October, noon, at St Mary Magdalene, Winton, Eccles. Followed by cremation at Overdale, Bolton. Any flowers to Laithwaite Brothers. 0161-736-1414

GRANT. Eric Donaldson (Donald) M.A. (HONS) M.B.T.A.T., died peacefully on 18th October at Malvern Community Hospital. Funeral at Worcester Crematorium on Tuesday 31st October at 12 noon. No flowers, donations if desired to The Alexander Trust Fund c/o Hollands Funeral Service, 71 Barnards Green Road, Malvern, Worcestershire.

SCHOLEY. On Thursday 19th October 1995 very unexpectedly, Mary (née Wallace) dearly beloved wife of John and mother of Ben and Amy of Dorking and formerly of Eire and Kidderminster. Funeral Service on Tuesday 24th October, Mitchelstown, County Cork.

In Memoriam

AUSTIN, George Alexander killed in action October 24th 1942, long remembered, son Tony.

Memorial Services

A MEMORIAL SERVICE in respect of Jeremiah Patrick Lordan will take place at St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church, St. Martin's Place, London WC2. On 26th October 1995 at 3.00pm.

■ To place your announcement telephone 0171 611 9060

Jackdaw

Northern soul

YOUNG SOOK is typical of the young women in North Korea. She is engaged and will marry in a month's time. She met her husband-to-be through friends — most couples meet this way or at college or work. But she'll have little time off work for the wedding. She and her groom will simply go to the local authority offices in the morning, sign a form, exchange watches, have a celebratory lunch and go back to work in the afternoon . . . If Young Sook has a baby, she and the child will be kept in isolation for two weeks after the birth. This is thought to be the best way of forming a maternal bond and keeping the child away from germs. When husbands visit, they must either stand in a cubicle and look through a window into the maternity ward and talk to their wives by telephone or communicate through a closed-circuit television system . . . In every building, in every school, factory and workplace, there is a portrait of the Great Leader. Even in a hairdresser's shop it will have pride of place — hung high, opposite the entrance, so that it is the first thing the customers see on entering. Next, the eye is drawn to the portraits of the 30 hairstyles that women are allowed to choose from. They are neat, functional and short. Similarly, clothes are neither luxurious nor extravagant. Cut from man-made fibres, they are functional and seemly, and like the majority of products in the country, they are made in North Korea. Women wear dark-coloured suits, belted dresses or long skirts — nothing shorter than knee-length — and shoe-heels must be no higher than a couple of inches . . . Among North Koreans there is some recognition that better conditions exist outside North Korea. Young Sook acknowledges that there is a difference in the quality of clothes from Western countries — but she dismisses this with ideological arguments. "In capitalist countries, clothes are luxurious and extravagant. In comparison, our clothes may not seem as good. But in our country, things are made for the masses, not just for a few rich people, so eveyone can be treated equally. A fundamental rule of our society is that everyone is treated equally."

Sung Khan reports on life inside North Korea for Marie Claire.

Cloud-free

IN HER modest way, Tania Bryer has wrought a significant change in the television viewing habits of the nation. She can be credited with inventing the field of celebrity meteorology.

She leapt to national fame as the woman who announced the weather on BSkyB and launched the cult of the Weather Girl.

Many have since attempted to emulate her success, but none has been able to make the idea of a severe depression covering the UK as attractive a prospect as she used to make it sound.

She has since moved away from weather forecasting, developed her broadcasting career and now has her own programme: "The Entertainment Show with Tania Bryer". She makes frequent appearances on other television networks and is often photographed at fashionable restaurants in London and the South of France.

The introduction to a financial profile of world-famed weather girl Tania Bryer in House And Garden magazine. Thanks to Frank Spink.

Down boy!

BEGIN BY choosing an area that has a tranquil atmosphere. Start the massage by giving your dog the strokes of affection he's used to. Then move on to light, feathery scratches on the chest area, cascading down to his belly. This feels good and reassures your pet that nothing unusual is about to happen.

With our hands resting lightly on his stomach, use slight pressure and glide your hands back up to the chest. Circle around in a swirling motion, following the contour of the rib cage, sweeping out, down, and around.

Use your voice. This is a vital part of the massage, bringing with it a mellowing effect. Talk in a strong, soothing tone: "You're so big and strong. What a good doggie you are. Oh, your fur's so soft and silky."

Now let's move into the thick, fleshy fur on the neck. Allow your fingers to travel freely up and around the back of the ears. This is always felt as a welcome dig.

The next step is to massage the leg muscles. Use light pressure and trace down the top of the thigh. Don't be surprised if a back leg starts to kick like a jackrabbit's. Let it shake, shiver, and twitch in ecstasy.

Remember to take things at the pace your dog allows. A dog massage can last as long as your pet is in the mood. Remember: it's the length of time that's important; it's the quality of the time you spend together.

Petting your pets, from "Dog Massage: The Lowdown On A Good Rubdown", published in Good Dog! magazine, and reprinted in Harper's magazine.

One party . . . Marie Claire

Old frontier

METAPHORICALLY speaking, is the concept of "cyberspace" sexist? The term has attained a ubiquity in cultural parlance unmatched since "TV" started tripping off people's tongues in the 1950s . . . Cyberspace has entered our daily lexicon, describing our relationship to computer networks and each other. But what does the metaphor really mean? In an essay in Resisting the Virtual Life, Laura Miller contends that cyberspace borrows from the macho Wild West mythos. Updated for the 1990s, the digital wilderness must be tamed by daring men who protect their women folk from rapacious scoundrels out to lure them into sex chat sessions or to browbeat them out of conversations. Wired women need to "refuse to acquiesce in these roles," she argues, which means that they have to change the way online technologies are talked about in the media . . . Rooted in these precepts of ownership and order, the cyberspace metaphor will lead to centralized regulation and even censorship, says Miller. As she asks: "When an Electronic Frontier Foundation member compares the Clipper chip to barbed wire encroaching on the prairie, doesn't he realize the surrender implied in his metaphor?" . . . The discourses used to describe computer technologies will play an important role in shaping what they become, argues Miller. While the cyberspace metaphor has helped us to understand our relationship to this communications medium, perhaps it's time to give up the term and address the social and economic forces that are converging to define our online world.

From the Utne Lens (http://www.utne.com), the Internet site of the Utne Reader.

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk.; fax 0171-713 4366; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Dan Glaister

Bank merger fever intensifies, page 12

Challenges for cable industry, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

FinanceGuardian

Setback for Clarke as Treasury cuts growth forecasts

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

TREASURY economists are cutting their growth forecasts for the economy this year after the latest set of official figures showed Britain expanding at its slowest rate for more than two years.

Chancellor Kenneth Clarke will unveil his new predictions after the latest official data revealed that the end of Britain's mini-manufacturing boom and the plight of the depressed construction sector slashed the annual growth rate in the third quarter.

The economy has grown by 0.5 per cent in each of the last two quarters, and it will now take expansion of 1 per cent in the final three months of the year for the Government to hit its forecast of 3 per cent growth for 1995 overall.

But with factory output and high-street spending weak, and only the relative buoyancy of the service sector keeping the economy ticking over, the authorities now believe 1 per cent growth in the fourth quarter is unlikely.

However, City analysts said the sluggishness of the economy provided the Chancellor with a stronger case for a tax-cutting budget and also shortened the odds on a reduction in interest rates in early 1996.

According to the Central Statistical Office, growth in the third quarter was 2.4 per cent higher than a year earlier, a continuation of the downward trend of the past 18 months. In the second quarter, the annual growth rate was 2.8 per cent, while in the spring of 1994 the economy was expanding at 4.3 per cent a year.

Gerard Lyons, chief economist with Japanese bank DKB, said: "This is a Goldilocks recovery — not too hot, not too cold. However, the figures should shift the emphasis from misplaced worries about inflation to the fact that the economy is clearly slowing down."

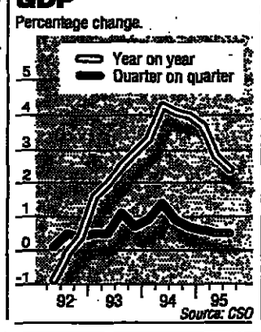
Mr Lyons added that the UK authorities should follow the example of the US Federal Reserve and cut interest rates to keep the economy moving.

Excluding the oil and gas sector, GDP rose by 0.5 per cent in the third quarter, down from 0.7 per cent in the previous quarter. As with GDP overall, the annual rate fell to 2.4 per cent from 2.8 per cent.

The CSO said the economy had grown for 14 successive quarters since the low point of the recession in the first quarter of 1992, and was now 9.5 per cent above the trough. Recovery has been faster than in the bounce-back from the slump of the early 1980s, when the economy expanded by 8.2 per cent in the first 14 quarters after the recession bottomed out.

Shadow chief secretary to the Treasury Andrew Smith said the figures left no room for complacency. "While the Chancellor boasts of a 'healthy recovery' which will 'run and run', not only has growth slowed, but public borrowing is higher now than it was this time last year and is on course to overshoot the Government's target.

GDP
Percentage change



Source: CSO

Pound plunges against mark as Europe panics

Sarah Ryle and
Larry Elliott

THE pound plunged to its lowest level against the mark for five months last night after political jitters across Europe accelerated the headlong flight into the German currency.

Sterling closed at 2.1871 marks — less than a pfennig from its all-time low of 2.1772 of May 9 this year — as it was dragged down by the weakness of the Italian lira and the French franc.

The recent strength in the mark has surprised leading economists in Germany, who were expecting their currency to decline against the US dollar, and so promote export-led growth.

A report from the so-called six wise men, out today, also predicted that German interest rates would rise next year, but City analysts said rates might have to be cut if the mark continued to power ahead. The pound has lost five pfennigs against the German currency in a week, while the dollar fell below DM1.40 yesterday.

Yesterday's fresh rise in the mark was triggered by fears that the Italian prime minister, Lamberto Dini, will lose a no-confidence vote scheduled for Thursday afternoon and so fail to get his budget passed. The lira hit a three-month low against the mark yesterday and closed at 1,168 lira to the mark compared to 1,145 on Friday night.

Kleinworts international economist, Julian Callow, said: "Investors dislike political uncertainty intensely. The Italian situation is becoming cloudier by the day. We cannot look for any meaningful recovery until after the elections. It is increasingly looking as though the Dini government will fall."

But PaineWebber international economist, Alison Cottrell, said that the lira could start to pick up as soon as the uncertainty over the budget was resolved. "What is worse than a government falling is wondering whether it will fall."

The problems of the French government also intensified yesterday following a request to the state prosecutor to investigate President Jacques Chirac over alleged use of a cheap rented flat in Paris. The franc fell to five-month lows during the day and closed at 3.5271 marks compared to 3.5197 on Friday.

Mr Callow said: "The Banque de France signalled a change in government policy as it only slightly raised interest rates in the morning whereas six months ago it would have reacted to a weak franc by hurting investors who wanted to sell with higher interest rates."

Ms Cottrell said the lira and the franc would continue to suffer against the mark whatever happened domestically because the dollar's weakness was boosting the German currency independently of European politics.

MODELS in clothes by royal designer Caroline Charles (above) caught the eye of Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, who toured the London Fashion Week at the Natural History Museum in London yesterday.

A spokesman for the show said: "He was as happy as a bunny. He was genuinely interested in what was going on."

The Department of Trade and Industry has given £100,000 to promote young British designers and the show, which has attracted a record number of buyers from around the world this year.

Sloppy dressers in the Government should watch out because there is a fashion pundit in their midst.

Mr Lang revealed the secret of his inside knowledge when he said: "I live in a house where I am the only man, so I have picked up something."

Mr Lang, who was appointed to his post in July, said he did not give advice on dress to his daughters Venetia, 23, and Lucy, 22, but he sometimes offered help to his wife, Sandra.

"We do not always agree," he confided.

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Japan official accused of silence over Daiwa

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

A FORMER executive of Daiwa Bank, responsible for managing the rogue trader Toshihide Iguchi who lost $1.1 billion (£710 million) in New York dealing in US treasury bonds, has accused the bank and the Japanese finance ministry of a conspiracy of silence over the losses.

Hiroyuki Yamaji, Daiwa's managing director for international business until he resigned this month over the New York debacle, contradicted Daiwa's previous explanation — that it had waited two months to report to the US authorities so that it could discover how much money had been lost. He also claimed that the highest finance ministry banking official had not encouraged Daiwa to report the losses.

In an interview with the leading Japanese newspaper, Asahi Shimbun, Mr Yamaji asserted that the bank had knowingly failed to report the loss to the US authorities.

"The bank thought that it would be severely damaged if we had disclosed the loss immediately after it was discovered," he claimed. "We were also concerned that its announcement could disrupt the financial markets."

When Mr Yamaji and other Daiwa executives saw Yoshimasa Nishimura, director general of the finance ministry banking bureau, on August 3, the official said "the timing was bad" and, so Mr Yamaji recounts, did not tell the bank to report the losses quickly.

Mr Yamaji says that the bank knew the extent of its loss as early as August 7, weeks before it disclosed it to the US Federal Reserve on September 26. "On August 7, we reached the conclusion that the total loss amounted to $1.1 billion and that it could be settled altogether when the half-year business term ended in September. Therefore we asked for a meeting with Nishimura ... Nishimura did not tell us what to do. But he said that 'the timing was bad', probably because our meeting took place right after Cosmo [a Japanese credit union] went bankrupt."

Mr Yamaji was asked: "Do you mean that Nishimura was negative about the bank's immediate announcement of the loss?" He replied: "He gave us that kind of impression."

Although a Daiwa spokesman denied that the bank knew the size of the losses as early as Mr Yamaji claims, the former managing director's statements will do enormous damage. Mr Nishimura was not available for comment, but Kyosuke Shinozawa, the finance vice minister (permanent secretary) denied that the banking chief had said the timing was bad. What he had said was that the financial situation was uncertain and therefore it was bad to spread unconfirmed information.

Partners pledge gas price cuts

Chris Barrie

THE prospect of a price war in the gas industry beckoned yesterday after an independent company pledged to undercut tariffs as part of its campaign to win customers from British Gas.

With British Gas's monopoly due to end in 1998, the regional electricity company Seeboard and the oil company Amoco announced a joint-venture gas company aiming to supply 10 per cent of the market — almost two million consumers — with gas by the year 2003.

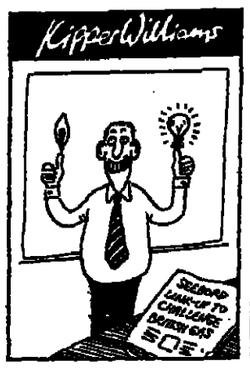
Mike Ambrose, managing director of Amoco Western Europe Gas, predicted competition would force prices down at least 10 per cent over five years in real terms. He said the company would discount prices further to win customers.

The fledgling firm will buy the services of Seeboard staff and use Amoco offshore gas reserves. Seeboard hopes that many of its two million electricity customers will buy gas from it. The new company will have a staff of 40, equity of £5 million-£10 million, and should be profitable within the first year.

Seeboard has placed its existing gas business, Southern Gas, into the joint venture and bought the 25 per cent stake owned by the gas shipper Utilicorp. Southern has 6,000 customers in the commercial and industrial market, which is already open to competition.

Amoco said it would supply gas from its Davy and Bessemer fields in the North Sea, which began operating this month. The contract with Seeboard is said to be long term but flexible and includes reviews of prices. As the market to supply households develops, Amoco expects to use reserves from fields as yet undeveloped.

The Seeboard-Amoco move came as the Government reiterated its determination to see pilots for competition start in April in the South-west, in the face of opposition from British Gas. Margaret Beckett, Labour shadow trade and industry secretary, condemned the uncertainty over whether the trials could go ahead on time.



US abandons talks after deadlock on Heathrow

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

A ROW on access to Heathrow Airport led to the United States yesterday abruptly breaking off talks with the British Government over a deal designed to give both countries better facilities for passengers and easier access to airports.

The talks, covering liberalisation of cargo services, charters and pricing, have been dragging on for months.

The key was increased access to Heathrow, which the Government, backed by British Airways, was not prepared to concede. The Americans had pressed for six new routes to Heathrow but were offered only two, and a further two to Gatwick. The US refused in turn to allow BA to compete for trade among American public servants travelling on business.

Transport Secretary Sir George Young said he was "puzzled and disappointed" by the Americans' decision to break off the talks, but stood ready to resume them as soon as they felt ready to do so.

He said Britain had made a number of important concessions, but that none were forthcoming from the US. Apart from the passenger routes, the Government had offered six US cargo flights from the UK to the Far East.

Sir George added: "The present arrangements are illiberal and restrictive, and hardly consistent with the US espousal of free trade."

Welsh Water to bid for Government research lab

Keith Harper on the trend to diversify among the utilities

WELSH Water emerged from the shadows yesterday to confirm it is a potential bidder for the Government's Transport Research Laboratory, which has an annual turnover of £31 million.

Welsh Water's engineering arm, Acer Consultants, said it was interested in the diverse appeal of the TRL, based at a 250-acre site at Crowthorne, Berkshire. It is among several groups competing with a management buy-out for the 60 year-old business, which is the largest centre for road transport study in Britain.

The TRL, providing data on excavations and trenches, has links with the water industry from which Welsh Water hopes to benefit. A decision about the sell-off will be made by Transport Secretary Sir George Young early next year.

The TRL once employed 1,200 staff but has suffered from recent cutbacks. It now employs 300 technical specialists, including mathematicians, engineers, geologists and computer experts — all determined that the TRL will remain in their hands.

Along with data enabling the Government to set standards for road and vehicle design and good traffic engineering practice, the TRL sells its services to other clients in the UK and overseas.

Facilities at Crowthorne include a state-of-the-art driving simulator, a test track, a self-contained road network and an indoor facility to test roads and advanced computer applications. It has an office in Livingston, looking after road transport in Scotland.

Welsh Water's bid demonstrates the range of interests of the newly privatised companies. With considerable assets, a number of them have invested unwisely, but the TRL is uniquely attractive.

The Government has said it wants the sale completed as soon as possible, and that po bidders must not be commercially connected with existing TRL activities.

Notebook

European storm spooks dollar

Edited by
Alex Brummer

THE only official opportunity for European finance ministers to discuss monetary union in Luxembourg yesterday was during lunch. But the gathering storm on the foreign exchange markets hung heavily over the session. The beginnings of a crisis, starting with the Italian lira, has spread to the French franc, with both currencies — reflecting political and Maastricht criteria worries — moving towards six-month lows against the German mark.

The rush into the mark is, in turn, having a wider impact. The dollar, having fallen back through the German mark's 1.40 benchmark last week, is now showing signs of a new free fall against the European currencies and the Japanese yen, undoing some of the gains seen this summer. This, according to well-placed monetary sources, is becoming a serious worry to finance ministers who have expended a great deal of energy trying to turn the tide against the dollar and restore what some believe has been a serious misalignment.

Although Germany generally approves of a strong currency as a further barrier against inflation, it is not what is needed right now. Against the odds, the Bundesbank engineered two interest rate cuts this year in an effort to restart a German economy which has seen jobs chased abroad by an over-confident mark. Finance ministers could yet resort to a further bout of intervention to support the dollar and steady some of the European parties; but nothing is likely to work better than a further easing by the Bundesbank.

Glaxo trials

RELIEF at the abandonment yesterday of Glaxo Wellcome's patent trial in the US was visible in a 6 per cent rise in the group's share price. Glaxo will have to do more than buy off its attackers, however, to prove that the takeover of Wellcome earlier this year has left it better placed than its rivals. The settlement of the case against Genpharm removes fears that Glaxo's blockbuster ulcer drug, Zantac, will face early generic competition. Other cases are pending, but this was the big one, and Genpharm's retreat means Zantac's US sales are secure for the time being.

Genpharm has not been left empty handed, however. Glaxo will pay unspecified sums over a three-year period. And while the money is not regarded as "material" to the group, it could run into tens of millions of dollars.

The payments probably say more about the risks of a jury trial in a technical case of this kind than they do about the soundness of Glaxo's patents. But they emphasise just how valuable Zantac has been and, they emphasise, how important it is for Glaxo to prove that there is life after Zantac.

Next month the group will unveil its research and development strategy. Attention will focus on the compounds which are being dropped from the merged programmes of Glaxo and Wellcome. But the company also needs to have something positive to say about new programmes, as well as defending its position.

Gas challenge

BRITISH Gas is on course for turbulence that will make its past seem positively serene. The regional electricity company Seeboard and oil company Amoco have declared their intention of taking a large slice of its 19 million domestic customers when the market is thrown open to full competition in 1998. Five other regional electricity companies already have stakes in gas ventures.

For British Gas, the prospect is daunting. Supplying domestic households is believed to give the gas utility its best return of all its businesses, although TransCo, the division that runs the gas transmission system, is highly profitable too. The precedent is not encouraging. In the industrial and commercial markets, BG's market share has fallen to 35 per cent in four years.

The domestic market may not follow suit — consumers will prize stability higher than professional gas buyers willing to renegotiate every 12 months — but BG will have to fight hard to keep its best customers and even harder to protect its profits: Amoco predicts that it will offer tariffs at least 10 per cent lower than present prices.

Add to this a pending regulatory review of profits at TransCo, cripplingly expensive take-or-pay gas supply contracts, and the on-going difficulties in retail and it is small wonder that the shares are performing so dismally.

BG appears to have grasped the severity of the challenge. Last month it belatedly remerged its business and public gas supply arms to concentrate its resources and expertise. It has recently attempted to give its boardroom more commercial expertise by signalling the departure of three of the old guard and their replacement by tougher managers. Now they will have to earn their bonuses.

Fake facts

ERICSSON rushed out a press release yesterday saying that another release, allegedly from its New York office, was a fake. The false report said the Swedish telecoms group was holding an extraordinary meeting following a hostile takeover bid from Motorola. Ericsson, however, cannot complain about the credence given to the fake since it has a habit of sending out releases about almost everything it does.

Guinness four's conspiracy claim 'scraped together'

A CLAIM that the four Guinness defendants were victims of a high-level conspiracy to abuse the legal process was "scraped together" after a trawl through thousands of normally privileged documents, Crown counsel told the Court of Appeal yesterday.

Defence lawyers conducted a "shameless fishing expedition" in search of "gobbets" of information to support their argument, said Sydney Kentridge, QC.

It would be intolerable and against the public interest to suggest that the police and the prosecuting authorities must lay bare every detail of the investigatory process which might have some remote relevance to defence suspicions, he said.

One of the two main planks of the current appeal by former Guinness chairman Ernest Saunders, Heron International tycoon Gerald Ronson, stockbroker Anthony Parnes and financier Jack Lyons, is that they were subjected to an unfair inquisition by Government inspectors before police were brought in.

The inspectors had the power to require suspects to make potentially self-incriminating statements unprotected by the "right to silence".

All four are challenging their 1990 convictions for taking part in an alleged illegal share support operation to boost the value of Guinness shares during the company's bitter £2.7 billion takeover battle for control of the Scottish drinks group Distillers.

Mr Kentridge said was "absurd" to claim the four were unaware of the peril of criminal prosecution while they were answering the inspectors' questions. The appeal continues today.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.045	France 7.44	Italy 2,485	Singapore 2.20
Austria 14.80	Germany 2.13	Malta 0.54	South Africa 5.55
Belgium 43.50	Greece 356.00	Netherlands 2.39	Spain 184.00
Canada 2.08	Hong Kong 11.97	New Zealand 2.34	Sweden 10.41
Cyprus 0.89	India 55.10	Norway 9.45	Switzerland 1.73
Denmark 8.28	Ireland 0.96	Portugal 225.00	Turkey 76,036
Finland 6.56	Israel 4.70	Saudi Arabia 5.88	USA 1.54

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

News in brief

Mirror pensioners sue Morgan Stanley

MORGAN Stanley is being sued for up to £65 million over the bank's role in looking after assets claimed by Mirror Group pension funds. Trustees for Mirror pensioners have filed a writ in the US District Court in New York alleging breach of fiduciary duty, breach of trust and breach of contract.

The bank was not part of the "global settlement" completed this year, in which a group of banks and advisers connected to the companies of the late Robert Maxwell paid a reported £276 million to make up pension-fund shortfalls.

It said it would contest the writ. "This claim is without foundation and we will seek to ensure that it will be seen as such if it comes before the courts," Morgan Stanley said. The claim is for compensatory and punitive damages, and unspecified interest. — *Dan Atkinson*

Lloyds eyes Argentina

LLOYDS Bank is set for expansion in Argentina, by planning to buy Banco Comercial del Tandil, one of several institutions bailed out by the country's central bank earlier this year. With the biggest presence in Argentina of any British bank, Lloyds is *thought to be talking to the central bank with a view to a deal.*

Banco Comercial del Tandil was one of several casualties last December when, in the wake of the Mexican devaluation crisis, the Argentinian banking system was hit by a run on deposits. The central bank took on the assets of several banks and has been trying to sell them piecemeal or in their entirety. — *Ian King*

STV stake rebuilt

MIRROR Group yesterday topped up its shareholding in Scottish Television, buying 2.4 million STV shares and bringing its total stake in the group back up to nearly 20 per cent.

Mirror Group's stake was diluted to just over 16 per cent last month when cable and satellite group Flextech paid £28 million to transfer its 20 per cent holding in HTV to STV, making it the biggest shareholder in Glasgow-based STV.

Shares in STV rose 7p to 508p as a result of the trade, in which Mirror Group is thought to have paid around 512p a share. That price is still well short of the 520p which Mirror paid last year during an initial £50 million swoop on STV. Cross-media ownership regulations prevent it owning more than 20 per cent of STV. — *Ian King*.

Heath ends joint venture

INSURANCE broking group CE Heath has sold its half-share in its Hong Kong-based joint venture for £16 million in cash to its partner, Rollins Hudig Hall Holdings. Heath said it would use the proceeds to provide additional investment capital for the future expansion of its broking operations, but remained committed to Asia. It intended to set up Heath Group operations in selected Asian countries. — *Pauline Springett*

Quaker chief on ice

THE president of Quaker Oats, Philip Marineau, yesterday announced his resignation — one year after the food company's troubled *acquisition of Snapple* Beverage. Snapple has performed disappointingly since it was bought for $1.7 billion (£1.1 billion). In the first six months of this year, sales of Snapple's once trendy drinks — including strawberry iced-tea — have fallen 17 per cent. *Quaker touted the Snapple acquisition as the cornerstone for its* restructuring into a "good for you" foods company. But after selling off its pet food and other businesses to pay for the Snapple deal, Quaker Oats has become a rumoured takeover target. Analysts said that Mr Marineau *has become the sacrificial lamb* in a deal yet to come to fruition. Mr Marineau was promoted to president in January 1993. — *Mark Tran in New York*

Thorn's £100m French leave

THORN EMI has raised £100 million cash by selling its 3.575 million shares in the SGS-Thomson Microelectronics firm. The music and electronics group said it had sold this remaining 2.8 per cent interest as part of a public offering of 18 million shares by the French semiconductor group and its majority shareholders. A spokesman said: "Thorn EMI will use the proceeds from the transaction to reduce borrowings." — *Tony May*

Secret goes public

INVESTORS wishing to put their money in women's lingerie will get their chance today with the public offering of Intimate Brands, parent company of Victoria's Secret. With its suggestive name and pictures of beautiful women, Victoria's Secret has become a minor cultural icon. Intimate Brands considered parading one of its supermodels, Stephanie Seymour, on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange for the start of trading. But modesty prevailed and the idea was scrapped.

Intimate Brands will be a clothing and toiletries company, carved out of Limited, the large speciality retailer. Limited is selling a 16 per cent stake in Intimate Brands, which accounts for 29 per cent of Limited's annual revenue of $7.3 billion (£4.6 billion), as part of an effort to capitalise on its faster-growing businesses and offset sagging sales in women's wear stores. — *Mark Tran in New York*

Copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, copy,
copy, copy, copy, copy, copy, at Sharp we not only judge a copier on how fast it copies, but also on how long it keeps copying. That's why we build our machines to last. If you'd like more information just call 0800 262 958 and quote reference number CGV L2.
SHARP
INTELLIGENT THINKING

Hard times . . . Dasa chairman Manfred Bischoff at a news conference in Munich yesterday on the planned job cuts PHOTOGRAPH: WOLFGANG RATTRAY

Strike threat as Dasa cuts jobs

DASA, the *struggling* aerospace division of Daimler-Benz which has pushed the group into *its first loss for 50 years*, was facing a possible strike yesterday after announcing plans to cut about 8,800 jobs and sell off three plants, *writes Katerina von Waldersee in Bonn.*

The measures are part of a restructuring programme codenamed Dolores — short for "dollar rescue" — which Dasa has adopted to compensate for huge losses caused by the appreciation of the mark against the dollar, the currency in which the Munich-based company sells its aircraft.

Dasa chairman Manfred Bischoff said the plan was "the only way" for the company to operate efficiently. But workers faced with a reduction in their numbers to just over 40,200 by the end of 1998, were due to hold meetings today to map out a strategy. Asked about a possible strike, Ingrid Luellmann, head of Dasa's works council, said: "We cannot rule anything out."

The restructuring plan, which is expected to cost at least DM500 million (£229 million), is due to be finalised at the end of November but its details require union agreement.

Bank merger fever reaches new peak

Mark Tran in New York

MERGER fever yesterday gripped two of America's biggest banks — BankAmerica and NationsBank — amid reports of talks between the two. Together they would create the largest bank in the US, with combined assets of $423 billion (£282 billion) and branches stretching coast to coast.

Shares in both companies rose on anticipation of a merger. But neither would comment and officials pointed to a number of difficulties. These include the issues of leadership of a new bank and location of its headquarters. NationsBank is based in Charlotte, North Carolina, while BankAmerica has its head office in San Francisco.

An alliance between the two would be the latest and biggest deal in an industry which has witnessed banks rushing to merge all year. The spur has been deregulation, competition from powerful mutual funds such as Fidelity Investments and technological change.

The increasing use of technology has meant that more financial products and services, from loans to credit cards, are being marketed via computers and telephones instead of branch offices. Other bank services, such as trading and securities processing, are even more technology-intensive — and expensive to implement. Mergers and acquisitions are proving to be the favoured way of acquiring critical mass as spending on technology outpaces the growth in earnings assets.

Meanwhile, in Japan, Mitsubishi Bank and Bank of Tokyo have combined to form the world's largest bank, with $700 billion of assets, and the UK has seen big financial deals of its own, including Lloyds Bank and TSB. But the pace of consolidation has been quickest in the US, which, with some 11,000 banks, has more per capita than any other country.

NationsBank, a large but regional operation until a few years ago, has risen to become the fourth-biggest US bank through an aggressive policy of acquisitions. In September, it announced plans to acquire Bank South in Atlanta for $1.6 billion in stock. Analysts have been waiting for NationsBank to make its big move.

There was speculation that it would team up with Chase Manhattan, but Chase decided to throw in its lot with Chemical Banking in August in a $10 billion deal. That would have created America's biggest bank, with assets of $297 billion, until yesterday's talk of an alliance between NationsBank and BankAmerica, the third-largest bank in the US. Last week even Wells Fargo joined in the frenzy with a rare hostile bid for First Interstate.

If the rumours prove true, BankAmerica would technically acquire NationsBank for about $22 billion, the second-biggest takeover in US history, just behind Kohlberg Kravis Roberts' leveraged buy-out of food and tobacco group RJR Nabisco for $25 billion. A key issue is leadership of the new entity. NationsBank's chairman, Hugh McColl, is one of the industry's most aggressive figures and it is difficult to see him as a second-in-command.

The two would complement *each other* geographically. NationsBank is strong in the South-east while BankAmerica is powerful in the West. They only overlap in Texas. Significant savings could be found in national operations that handle credit cards, mortgages and corporate lending. In lunchtime trading, NationsBank was up $1 at $71 and BankAmerica was up $1.37 at $64.

Azerbaijan gives Russian company bigger oil role

Patrick Donovan, City Editor, in Baku

RUSSIA'S exploration company, Lukoil, looks *set to assume a far bigger role* in the development of the gigantic Azerbaijan oilfields. The extra rights are *part of what is viewed as a* diplomatic move to encourage Moscow to give its blessing to politically sensitive $8 billion (£5.16 billion) offshore production plans by a consortium of the world's biggest oil companies led by British Petroleum.

Under the forthcoming agreement, Lukoil, the sole Russian member of the BP-led Azerbaijan International Operating Company, is expected to be given the additional right to head a separate exploration consortium after talks with the country's government. The Caspian Sea drilling consortium led by Lukoil also has Agip of Italy and the US oil group, Pennzoil, as partners.

The deal involves offshore exploration rights in Karavagh basin, due North of the estimated 4 billion barrel Caspian sea oilfield now being developed by the AIOC consortium of 11 major oil companies.

In a separate move, BP — which last year signed a deal to spend $8 billion developing the offshore field — is also trying to set up its own independent exploration consortia for the Caspian Sea.

BP is understood to be in advance negotiations with Turkish Petroleum and the Norwegian oil company Statoil, both members of the AIOC consortium.

The deal involves rights to explore in the Shakh Deniz field in the Caspian Sea, just one of Azerbaijan's undeveloped oil fields which have already prompted Western observers to describe the country as the next Kuwait.

It is understood that the Azerbaijan government is giving Lukoil the opportunity to expand its interest in the region as part of a deal to improve its deteriorating relations with Moscow.

The Russian government warned that it would oppose the original oil deal, signed by the AIOC consortium in a fanfare of publicity last year. It has since eased its position but both Western oil companies and the Azerbaijan government view Russian support as vital as they decide how to transport oil out of the volatile Caucasus region.

Russia has repeatedly lobbied for the oil to be pumped into its own transmission system and is unhappy about Azerbaijan's commanding role in the development of one of the world's largest undeveloped oil reserves, which could generate $100 billion over the next 30 years.

Earlier this month, the Western consortium underlined the huge political problems of operating in the region when it attempted to appease competing interests by announcing plans to run initial oil production from Azerbaijan through two separate pipeline networks. The first runs north through Russia, via wartorn Chechnya, to Novorossisk on the Black Sea. The other runs west through Georgia to Turkey. But the government and oil company still have to decide how to route the main pipeline which will be capable of carrying up to 700,000 barrels of oil a day.

Azerbaijan is forced to transport oil over neighbouring territory because its offshore oil fields lie in the landlocked Caspian Sea. Any chance of handling the pipelines is being fought over by Russia, Armenia, Georgia and Turkey because of the huge value of the prospects of refinery and oil processing.

Azerbaijan's minister of foreign economic relations yesterday refused to say which pipeline route his government favoured. But he admitted the oil development was crucial for a country which he described as undergoing "economic crisis".

Tycoon 'gambled £1bn in a month'

Maxwell trial

Dan Atkinson

ROBERT MAXWELL gambled £1 billion in just one month of foreign-exchange speculation, an Old Bailey court was told yesterday. The tycoon had been betting that sterling would rise against the dollar during July, 1991 and he made a gross profit of £7 million.

Kevin Maxwell told jurors his father "was a substantial speculator" in currency markets. He said also that the publisher had been aware of the so-called Max Factor, whereby the City would mark down the value of Maxwell-related shares simply because of his father's involvement.

He spoke of his father's near-40-year relationship with National Westminster Bank, a relationship so close that the Maxwell private empire had a "back-pocket" facility, allowing borrowings, almost without warning, of between £150 million and £200 million, secured on assets.

But Kevin said he came to regard senior NatWest executive Bob Brown's involvement in the Maxwell accounts as signalling a change; he had, he said, seen Mr Brown as "a hatchet man".

He told jurors that, overall at this time: "The group exhibited illiquidity." But Robert Maxwell rejected suggestions of a standstill arrangement on bank-loan repayments, said Kevin. "He had, in his *terms*, over 40 years not failed to honour a banking commitment and a banking obligation." There had been "a tremendous measure of pride" on Robert Maxwell's part regarding this.

Kevin Maxwell, aged 36, denies one charge of conspiring with his father to defraud pension funds. He denies jointly with his brother Ian, aged 39, and financial adviser Larry Trachtenberg, aged 42, a second charge of conspiring together to defraud pension funds.

In 1991, said Kevin, NatWest wanted the emphasis of its relationship to shift from debt to repayment. At the end of July, the Maxwell group burst its overdraft limits by £90 million, the court was told, after two expected payments were not received.

NatWest had been concerned, said Kevin Maxwell, and wanted additional security. Loans from the end of July were required to be covered by collateral worth 150 per cent of the borrowings.

On August 7, the Maxwell empire was able to borrow another £40 million. Mr Jones asked Kevin: "Did anybody from NatWest Bank from July 31 to August 7 suggest that you were trading while insolvent?" "No," Kevin replied.

Whilst NatWest had not welcomed the increased exposure at the end of July and the beginning of August, the bank remained a solid supporter of the group, said Kevin.

The case continues today.

Drawing up the battle lines

***OUTLOOK/BT* is not the only challenge facing cable, Nicholas Bannister reports**

FAR-reaching changes face Europe's cable industry as it gathers for its annual conference in London this week.

The biggest issue will be if and when British Telecom will be free to compete head on with the cable operators by offering broadcast entertainment over its network. An incoming Labour government has promised to free BT's shackles as soon as it can.

But equally important will be the extent to which cable companies will merge to meet the BT threat. The industry consists of a handful of large operators, such as TeleWest, Nynex CableComms and General Cable, with a host of smaller companies.

Wayne Gowen, chairman of the Cable Communications Association, is among those who believe there will be only half a dozen large cable operators and a few niche players. But others argue top companies will not be allowed to swallow up their smaller brethren, and that there is no natural leader among the smaller companies who could weld them into a coherent, larger player.

The government is counting on cable operators to build a national information superhighway, albeit in patchwork fashion. Most cable companies' networks, covering the most densely populated areas, are due to be completed by the end of the decade.

Ministers believe that encouraging operators to link their networks will create a broadband fibre-optic network capable of handling the services expected of an information superhighway.

Yet large areas of the country are not covered by franchises, and few have any idea how rural homes will get access to the superhighway.

The cable companies point out that it is not economic to build rural networks. The costs of digging trenches and laying cable are too high for the potential return.

Eventually, all parties hope they will be rescued by technology — improved compression techniques coupled with local wireless links or low-orbit satellite systems capable of handling high capacity and two-way signals.

BRITISH Telecom's trump card, played with great success in its talks with the Labour Party, is that it already has a comprehensive network which can be upgraded to become a broadband superhighway.

Three other factors will help shape the cable industry over the next few years: *changing cable legislation in the US and continental Europe, content, and* telecommunications.

The big US phone and cable companies provided backing and expertise for Britain's fledgling cable industry partly because the UK was the only country in the world which allowed operators to offer both cable TV programmes and telephone services.

THIS dual revenue stream has been cable's saving grace. Industry experts estimate that by increasing investment by a third to provide telephone services, revenue can be doubled.

Legislators in the US are on the brink of removing the restrictions which have prevented the combination of local cable and telephone services. Many of the US personnel who have gained experience of combined services in the UK will return to help their parent companies exploit the new opportunities at home.

Fresh prospects will open up on mainland Europe as state-owned telecommunication firms lose monopoly status. The EC wants cable companies to build a telecommunications infrastructure which will rival those of the state monopolies. Herbert Ungerer, head of the commission's competition division, said yesterday the EC intended cable companies to have the same competitive regulatory environment on the mainland as they enjoyed in the UK.

This would mean they would be free to offer telecom services while the former monopolies would be banned *from using their* phone networks to deliver television programmes.

Richard Woollam, the director general of the Cable Communications Association, said cable companies could expect to invest 80 billion ecu (£66 billion) in mainland Europe over the next 10 years, ultimately generating annual revenue of about 20 billion ecu.

Who owns or provides the content for cable operators remains a vexed issue. Attempts by UK companies to set up a jointly owned programme-making venture fell apart after the two largest, TeleWest and Nynex CableComms, signed long-term deals with British Sky Broadcasting.

Alan Bates, chief executive of Bell Cablemedia, said the industry was now likely to rely more on regulation rather than co-operative ventures to ensure low-cost access to programming. Ian Taylor, the technology and science minister, has already told the industry to consider existing competition legislation as a way of breaking the dominance of groups such as Sky.

Cable expects to grab a greater share of the country's disposable income in the years ahead. The only problem is that there are few signs that anyone is going to have any extra cash to spend. If cable is to expand, something else will have to contract.

Irretrievable breakdowns . . . Faldo, above, is said to have offered his second wife Gill, far left, a £7.5 million settlement plus custody of their three children. The divorce of Fred Couples, shown with his wife in 1992, was highly publicised

The golfer's life of trouble and strife

Wealthy professional golfer, tall, dark, handsome, rarely at home, seeks understanding wife . . . **David Davies** on the game's high divorce rate

JOSE-MARIA Olazabal, rich beyond compare in Spanish terms and handsome enough, has no regular girlfriend at the age of 29. Once, when Robert Lee, a journeyman player on the European Tour, was passing with a beautiful girl on his arm, Olazabal remarked: "I would like a girl like Roberto's. But I would not like to play golf like Roberto."

When asked why he is not yet married, Olazabal is frank. "It is easy for me to get a girl," he says. "But it is not easy for me to get a girlfriend. What can I offer her?" he asks. "Twenty days around Christmas and the New Year? I do not think that it is enough."

Olazabal, thoughtful and intelligent, is aware of the problems in a sportsman's marriage, particularly that of a golfer whose season can be 12 months long and for whom every tournament means at least a week away from home. Even the weeks off must contain a lot of practice.

Nick Faldo's second marriage, which has appeared imperilled for some time, has broken up. Reports from Tucson, Arizona, say he is escorting a student from the University there, Brenna Cepelak, and he is now seeking a divorce from Gill, his wife of nine years.

Faldo, who has three children — Natalie, nine; Matthew, six, and Georgia, two — is said to have offered his current wife a settlement of £7.5 million, to include their mansion in Windlesham, plus custody of the children.

His problems emphasise that the life of a professional sportsperson is not always easy. A few years ago Sandy Lyle's marriage broke up and, more recently, Fred Couples and John Daly have had highly publicised divorces. In Europe two Ryder Cup players David Feherty and Barry Lane, as well as Mark Roe, have split with their wives as the interminable travelling and pressure of making money only if they play well that week take their toll.

Feherty is another player who went to try his luck in the United States, not because he particularly wanted to but because his wife, a South African, wanted to live in a warmer climate than Ireland or England. So they and their two children set up house in Dallas and Feherty qualified for the US Tour.

That he badly missed not only the European Tour but also his lifetime friends was quickly evident and, with his wife refusing to relocate again, a split became inevitable. In other cases the pressures of a complicated life with long absences from families can do the trick on their own.

This week Faldo, for many Europe's best golfer ever, will not be playing in the season-ending Volvo Masters which begins at Valderrama in southern Spain on Thursday. In spite of the three-line whip imposed by the European Tour for this event Faldo, who still has a chance of winning the US Money List, prefers to play in the Tour Championship at Southern Hills, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

That he has ignored his own tour's event for the richer American equivalent might be used as yet another stick with which to beat the recently much battered English golfer. However, with Faldo there is another, less-publicised side to his life, as was demonstrated recently in the US and Ireland.

Shortly after the Ryder Cup Faldo was contacted by the "Make a Wish Foundation" on behalf of an 18-year-old golfer named Paul Conaty, who played at the Clontarf club in Dublin. Conaty, a cancer sufferer for six years, was in hospital but during his illness managed to get down to a handicap of six. He had played for the Clontarf team and was such an admirer of Faldo that he had tried to emulate not only his swing but also his mannerisms.

However, he was in the final stages of his illness. His father, Tom, says: "On the Friday before Paul died Nick Faldo rang him at the hospital and they chatted for about half an hour. It was after the Ryder Cup, so I'm sure Paul had plenty of questions. He watched the closing stages on television and, sick as he was, he still managed to get up in the bed when Philip Walton was striking that putt on the 18th."

After that initial conversation Faldo promised to phone again and, when he did so, was told Paul had died that morning. He sent a wreath to the family and Tom Conaty says: "I've never met Nick Faldo but I deeply appreciate his gesture to Paul, who idolised him. It meant a huge amount to our family."

● The injured foot which forced Olazabal to miss the Ryder Cup and the last four European tournaments will also keep him out of the Volvo Masters.

Racing

Cup support for Harayir and Lake Coniston

Ken Oliver

DESPITE optimism among British trainers with runners in the Breeders' Cup events at Belmont Park on Saturday, Ladbrokes are still convinced that we will draw a blank in New York, offering 4-6 no British winner and 11-10 one or more.

Ian Wassell, spokesman for Ladbrokes, said: "Both sides of the Atlantic have had time to digest our odds and the best backed British horses are Lake Coniston in the Sprint, down to 4-1 from 5s, and Harayir, 8-1 from 12s, in the Mile.

Dick Hern, Harayir's trainer, said his filly is as well as she has ever been this season and the 1,000 Guineas winner was among a party of 10 horses that flew out to the United States from Stansted yesterday.

Ascot racegoers on Saturday can stay on and watch the seven races from Belmont Park at no extra cost.

The Ascot jumps programme begins at 12.55, with the last race at 4.10, while the American show gets under way at 3.55, ending with the Classic clash between Cigar and Halling at 7.10.

Lady Herries's horses are in fine form and the Arundel trainer could well land an across-the-card double this afternoon with Zajko at Leicester and Ocean Park at Redcar.

Zajko can be given a good chance in the Ermine Street Handicap where he will be running over his best trip of one mile. He won over this distance at Newbury in May when, scoring in a 25-runner handicap, he put up his best effort of the season.

After finishing down the field behind Salt Lake over 10 furlongs at Ascot the following month, he was given a break until reappearing at Ascot at the end of September when he did not have the best of runs, finishing eighth to Mo-Addab.

Zajko (3.15)cf1 attracted some heavy bets in his next race at York earlier this month when eighth to Commando Companion. He did not appear on the scene until late in that mile race after being hampered two out. His task looks easier and he carries the nap.

Ocean Park, trained last year by Peter Makin, made a winning start under the care of Lady Herries on the all-weather at Southwell in June only to be disqualified after failing a dope test.

He has run only twice since then, but his third behind Samba Sharply at Doncaster last Thursday puts him in with a first rate chance in the Telepromper Limited Stakes at Redcar.

John Reid reached his century for the season when landing a double on Tsarnista and Tadeo at Lingfield yesterday. He also reached the three-figure mark in 1993 with a score of 108.

"It is a milestone for any jockey to reach the century," said Reid. "And it may not be over yet, as Pure Grain could go for the Japan Cup next month."

Reid reached the 99 mark on Tsarnista, trained by John Dunlop, in the second division of the EBF Cedar Maiden Stakes. The two-year-old, who started even money, scored by two lengths from stablemate Royal Diversion.

Tadeo, trained by Mark Johnston, made all the running to beat Songsheet by three and a half lengths in the Jardine Insurance Brokers Burr Stake, bringing a change of luck for the stable, which had only two previous winners in the last fortnight.

Double Trigger fit for Melbourne Cup

DOUBLE TRIGGER, who now weighs in at his racing weight of 471 kilos after three days when he was off his feed while in quarantine in Australia, is back on course for his bid for next month's Melbourne Cup despite another worry for his connections.

His trainer, Mark Johnston, who flies out to Melbourne next Monday to supervise final preparations for the race on November 7, said yesterday: "He is a horse that rolls a lot in his box and he rolled about a little last night and knocked a hind fetlock joint.

"But the vet who visited him reported that the horse was fine and did not need drugs or anything like that.

"We will be getting another report, but he is up and ready to go. Because of the fact that he rolls about, he is in a rubber-lined box at home, but his box in Melbourne is brick-lined."

Redcar card with form guide

1.30 Time To Tango
2.00 Sandblaster
2.30 Shabanaz
3.00 Ocean Park
3.30 Mishen
4.00 Roses In The Snow
4.30 Far Ahead (nb)

Draw: High favoured straight course.
★ Denotes blinkers. Going: Firm
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

1.30 ERF WILTON MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES 2YO 5f £3,020

1 408 BELDRAY PARK (21) Mrs A King 9-0 — A Garth 3
2 00 JIVE BABY (10) N Bycroft 9-0 — L Charnock 6★
3 RR LUGANA BOY (32) A Smith 9-0 — M Birch 4
4 000220 MISTER JOEL (8) M W Easterby 9-0 — S Maloney 5★
5 03 NITROWL RAIDER (182) J A Harris 9-0 — Martin Dwyer (7) 5
6 354455 CORNICHE QUEST (8) M Channon 8-8 — R Hughes 11
7 65400 LADY ECLAT (31) J Glover 8-9 — S D Williams 2★
8 50000 SPRING SILHOUETTE (11) Mrs V Aveyard 8-9 — M Dearing 10★
9 036300 SUPERFILLS (24) Miss L Siddall 8-8 — T Williams 8
10 5 TIME TO TANGO (10) G Moore 8-8 — D McKeown 7
11 400508 VEENEY (21) John Berry 8-8 — M Fenton 1
11 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Mister Joel 8, Time To Tango 7, Lady Eclat 6

No corresponding meeting

Betting: 9-4 Time To Tango, 3-1 Veeney, 6-1 Mister Joel, 8-1 Corniche Quest, 10-1 Superfills, 14-1 Nitrowl Raider, Lady Eclat.

FORM GUIDE - LUGANA BOY: Has virtually refused to race on each of his 2 appearances to date. NITROWL RAIDER: Outsider-of-4, led to halfway, around 10l 3rd to Sabay Babe (Redcar 5f, Gd-Fm). CORNICHE QUEST: Soon prominent, led briefly 1f out, around 6l 5th of 16 to Bees River (Folkestone 6f, Gd). TIME TO TANGO: Slowly away, stayed on well in latter stages without threatening principals. 6l 6th of 15 to Johayro (Catterick 5f, Gd-Fm). VEENEY: Soon to the fore, no extra final 1f, 2l 3rd of 14 to Second Time Lucky with BELDRAY PARK (rec 5lb) disputed least until weakened final 1f, around 10l farther away 6th (Warwick 6f, Gd-Sft).

2.00 LEVY BOARD NURSERY HANDICAP 2YO 6f £3,644

1 351100 BOFFY (24) (D) B Baugh 9-7 — Jason Weemes (7) 9
2 131216 TIMES OF TIMES (22) (D) M Ryan 9-7 — C Rutter 12
3 5601 BEAS RIVER (8) (7lb ex) (D) W Muir 9-6 — W Woods 17
4 140 TROPICAL BEACH (18) J Berry 9-4 — P Roberts (7) 7
5 3580 PERCY PARK (30) M W Easterby 9-4 — J Fanning 1
6 5040 POLISH SAGA (32) M Dods 8-13 — N Connorton 10
7 005023 POLY BY STANFAN (10) M Channon 8-13 — R Hughes 18
8 4030 ECCENTRIC DANCER (10) M Bailey 8-13 — S D Williams 13
9 464002 CAMIONNEUR (11) M H Easterby 8-11 — M Birch 14★
10 213200 SKELETON KISS (11) Mrs M Reveley 8-11 — G Parkin (3) 3
11 01850 EVERYONE'S CAR DREAM (28) Denys Smith 8-10 — L Charnock 8
12 503530 TIME TO FLY (11) B Murray 8-10 — T Williams 6
13 201480 ORIOLE (32) (D) N Tinkler 8-9 — Kim Tinkler 15
14 540500 KATIE KOMATIE (10) Capt J Wilson 8-8 — P Fessey (5) 19
15 0065 THE BARNSLEY BELLE (11) S Norton 8-8 — Dean McKeown 6
16 0000 SANDBLASTER (10) Mrs J Ramsden 8-1 — S Sanders 14
17 02606 TALLULAH BELLE (24) N Littmoden 8-1 — M Henry (5) 2
18 0500 TAUREAN FIRE (40) Mrs M Reveley 8-1 — D Duffy (7) 11
19 000000 WEPETITE (8) N Bycroft 7-12 — S Maloney 20
20 600 CANDY'S DELIGHT (29) J Eyre 7-12 — M Varley (3) 4
20 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Times Of Times 8, Boffy 7, Sandblaster 6

Betting: 5-1 Sandblaster, 8-1 Camionneur, 8-1 Boffy, Beas River, 10-1 Poly By Stanfan, Time Of Times, 12-1 Tropical Beach, Time To Fly.

FORM GUIDE - TIMES OF TIMES: Second favourite, carried left 1f out and soon no extra, around 5l 6th of 7 to Al Shata (Brighton 7f, Gd). BEAS RIVER: Held up, effort 2f out, led 1f out, bt Solis of Holland by 3l, in 16-runner 0-60 rating related maiden (Folkestone 6f, Gd). TROPICAL BEACH: Never able to challenge after a slow start, 7th of 11, btn around 9l, to Charterhouse Xpress (Haydock 5f, Gd-Sft). POLY BY STANFAN: Mid-division, stayed on under pressure final 1f, 4l 3rd of 15 to Johayro in maiden with SANDBLASTER (levels) never near to challenge, 6l further back 7th and KATIE KOMATIE (levels) last touch from halfway, around 2l further back 12th (Catterick 5f, Gd-Fm). CAMIONNEUR: In touch, kept on well final 1f, 1¾l 2nd of 18 to Swyncford Dream with TIME TO FLY (gv 5lb) outpaced final 2f, around 2¾l farther back 7th (Catterick 5f, Gd-Fm).

2.30 BRASS CASTLE CLAIMING STAKES 1m 2f £2,057

1 2-003 ABALDALDO (10) P Kelleway 3-9-1 — D McKeown 9
2 554600 MANFUL (8) J Hetherton 3-8-1 — N Kennedy 2
3 204151 SHABANAZ (57) (D) W Muir 10-9-13 — C Rutter 1
4 0/00-06 BOLD JOKER (10) G Oldroyd 4-8-11 — J Lowe 11
5 00/035- SCHOOL OF SCIENCE (461) R McKellar 5-8-8 — J Fanning 8
6 400006 BARDIA (28) Don Enrico Incisa 5-8-6 — Kim Tinkler 7
7 156022 GOODBYE MILLIE (10) (D) J Eyre 5-8-6 — N Lapple 3★
8 00-0000 MARBLE (173) (D) M Meagher 4-8-2 — M Varley (3) 10
9 006056- STANSHAW (468) W Storey 6-8-2 — Dale Gibson 4
10 00-00 HERE COMES HERBIE (10) W Storey 3-8-1 — P Fessey (5) 12
11 00 HANDSOME SQUAW (128) B Murray 3-7-12 — T Williams 13
12 510008 HUNZA STORY (5) N Littmoden 3-7-12 — M Henry (5) 6
13 00 KENGATE HUSH (33) B Murray 3-7-12 — Martin Dwyer (7) 5
13 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Shabanaz 9, Goodbye Millie 7, Manful 6

Betting: 5-2 Shabanaz, 7-2 Manful, 4-1 Goodbye Millie, 8-1 Abaldaldo, 10-1 Hunza Story, 14-1 Bardia.

FORM GUIDE - ABALDALDO: Slowly away, headway 4f out, one pace final 2f when 3rd, btn 6l, to Once More For Luck (Catterick 1m4f, Gd-Fm). SHABANAZ: In touch, headway halfway, led inside final 1 when big Bronze Runner 1l (Warwick 1m3f, Fst). BARDIA: Held up, ridden 4f out, never troubled leaders when 6th, btn 13l, to Keep Your Distance (Hamilton 1m3f, Gd). GOODBYE MILLIE: Chased leaders, driven along 5f out, kept on final 2f when 2nd, btn 4l, to Once More For Luck (Catterick 1m4f, Gd-Fm). HANDSOME SQUAW: Soon ridden along, never went pace when 7th, btn 16l, to Kalant At Wild (Thirsk 7f, Gd-Fm).

3.00 TELEPROMPTER LIMITED STAKES 1m 2f £3,966

1 223031 ONCE MORE FOR LUCK (10) Mrs M Reveley 4-9-6 — A Culhane 9
2 444000 JOHNNIE THE JOKER (10) J Leigh 4-9-3 — M Birch 5★
3 402-003 OCEAN PARK (5) Lady Herries 4-9-3 — Dean McKeown 1
4 561F12 ANOTHER TIME (15) (BF) S Woods 3-9-2 — W Woods 3
5 06001 ALMUSTARAM (21) (C) Miss Gay Kelleway 3-9-0 — A Whelan (3) 2★
6 006300 BALLARD KING (17) J Wainwright 4-8-12 — R Hughes 7
7 606-000 EFIZIA (14) (C) (D) Mrs M Reveley 5-8-12 — L Charnock 8
8 312544 ZACAROON (10) (D) (BF) Lord Huntingdon 4-8-12 — S Sanders 6
9 234210 DOMITIA (18) (D) M Bell 3-8-9 — M Fenton 4
9 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Ocean Park 10, Once More For Luck 8, Almustaram 7

Betting: 3-1 Ocean Park, 4-1 Once More For Luck, 9-2 Another Time, 5-1 Almustaram, 6-1 Zacaroon, 7-1 Domitia, 10-1 Efizia.

FORM GUIDE - ONCE MORE FOR LUCK: Held up, headway 6f out, led 3f out, soon clear when big Goodbye Millie (Catterick, 1m4f, Gd-Fm). OCEAN PARK: Held up, headway over 1f out, ran on inside final 1 when 3rd, btn 1¾l, to Samba Sharply (Nottingham 1m, Gd-Fm). ANOTHER TIME: Chased leaders, effort over 2f out, ran on inside final 1 when 2nd, btn 3l, to Beadico (Leicester 1m, Gd). ALMUSTARAM: In touch, headway over 2f out, led over 1f out, ran on well when big Carnelace III (Redcar 1m, Fm). ZACAROON: Midfield, outpaced 4f out, stayed on final 1 when 4th, btn 6l, Heathyards Lady (Wolverhampton 1m1f, Std). DOMITIA: In touch, effort over 2f out, soon beaten when 10th, btn 31l, to Debutante Days (Haydock 1m2f, Gd-Sft).

3.30 ELLERBY HANDICAP 1m £4,176

1 521000 SPANISH VERDICT (12) (C) (D) Denys Smith 8-10-0 — C Teague (3) 3
2 420013 MONT WINK (10) (BF) D Nicholls 3-9-12 — Martin Dwyer (7) 8
3 654016 PIGGANT (63) (D) Lord Huntingdon 6-9-11 — S Sanders 11
4 313000 CHESTNUT (21) (C) (D) M Dods 4-9-3 — D McKeown 4★
5 33300 MITMAAM (22) Mrs A Swinbank 3-9-1 — N Connorton 1
6 000581 MIMLINA (13) (CD) R Fahey 5-8-9 — L Charnock 12
7 412004 THATCHED (13) (CD) R Barr 5-8-13 — P Fessey (5) 2
8 340600 PINE RIDGE LAD (10) J Eyre 5-8-13 — S D Williams 13
9 600050 MY HANDY MAN (56) R Allan 4-8-10 — A Culhane 9
10 238344 BOBBY BARNES (12) (D) Don Enrico Incisa 6-8-4 — Kim Tinkler 5
11 132000 KURO SCEPTIC (21) M H Easterby 3-8-3 — S Maloney 7★
12 055-000 DALLY BOY (11) M H Easterby 3-8-1 — J Lowe 14
13 340500 ROYAL COMEDIAN (24) B Murray 6-7-13 — T Williams 6
14 060060 SALLYONHALLY (10) W Storey 4-7-7 — M Varley (3) 10
14 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Mimlina 8, Mitmaam 7, King Chestnut 6

Betting: 9-2 Mimlina, 5-1 Night Wink, 6-1 Thatched, Piggant, 10-1 Pine Ridge Lad, Hobby Barnes, 12-1 King Chestnut.

FORM GUIDE - NIGHT WINK: Tracked leaders, effort 2f out, one pace from over 1f out when 3rd, btn 4l, to Blue Bomber (Catterick 7f, Gd-Fm). MIMLINA: Made all, stayed on well under pressure approaching final 1 when big Admirals Flame 1¾l, with THATCHED (gv 8lb) abt 1¾l back in 4th, stayed on well approaching final 1 (Redcar 1m, Fm). BOBBY BARNES: Behind, good headway over 2f out, edged left and stayed on well final 1 when 4th, btn abt 1¾l, to Sevenleaves Lucky (York 1m1f, Gd). ROYAL COMEDIAN: Left in lead stands' side entering straight, headed over 2f out, faded over 1f out when 6th, btn 12l, to Ardlieur (Haydock 7f, Std).

4.00 CAPTAIN COOK CONDITIONS STAKES 2YO 7f £3,470

1 43 KARISHA (17) Denys Smith 8-11 — T Williams 2
2 SLEEPY BOY W Storey 8-11 — J Fanning 1
3 160 LA VOLTA (12) J FitzGerald 8-10 — R Hughes 5
4 0 CALL ME JENNIE (10) J Leigh 8-6 — D McKeown 4
5 420020 ROSES IN THE SNOW (22) J Hills 8-6 — M Henry (5) 3
5 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Roses In The Snow 8, La Volta 7

Betting: 7-4 Roses In The Snow, 2-1 La Volta, 11-4 Karisha, 8-1 Call Me Jennie, 20-1 Sleepy Boy.

FORM GUIDE - KARISHA: Promising run, kept on one pace, 3rd btn 6l behind Consultal (York 1m, Gd). SLEEPY BOY: By useful Zero Watt; dam, Furnace Lass VII, unraced non-thoroughbred. LA VOLTA: Edged right and kept on same pace final 2f, 10th of 26, btn about 7l, to Blue Iris (Redcar 6f, Fm). CALL ME JENNIE: Always behind on debut, last of 7, btn over 20l, to Dwangoko (Catterick 5f, Gd-Fm). ROSES IN THE SNOW: Good effort in 30-runner valuable conditions race, never nearer, 8th btn 7l behind Rio Duvida (Newmarket 7f, Gd).

4.30 CANTON HANDICAP 7f £3,971

1 24-5005 NEW CENTURY (20) (D) D Nicholls 3-10-0 — R Hughes 11
2 121000 KING RAT (17) (CD) T Etherington 4-9-10 — C Rutter 12★
3 3213 FAR AHEAD (28) J Eyre 3-9-7 — N Lapple 14
4 651300 PARLIAMENT PIECE (17) (CD) D Nicholls 9-9-4 — N Connorton 7
5 524310 QUILLING (13) (CD) M Dods 5-9-2 — D McKeown 6
6 0-14600 GLOWING JADE (15) (C) (D) J Glover 5-9-1 — S D Williams 4
7 1-02300 SUPERPRIDE (19) Mrs M Reveley 3-9-0 — A Culhane 2
8 222610 KID ORY (10) (CD) P Calver 4-8-9 — M Varley (3) 9
9 504606 FIELD OF VISION (10) (CD) M Johnston 5-8-10 — T Williams 13
10 400000 SUPER PARK (10) M H Easterby 3-8-9 — M Birch 15
11 312200 SUPER BENZ (57) (CD) F O'Mahony 9-8-7 — L Newton (5) 3
12 20422 MISTER WESTSOUND (21) Miss L Perratt 3-8-6 — Martin Dwyer (7) 1★
13 100006 PENNY'S WISHING (10) J Leigh 3-7-12 — P Fessey (5) 8
14 0020-30 ALABANG (41) M Catracho 4-7-9 — L Charnock 10
15 600050 MU-ARRIK (16) (C) G Oldroyd 7-7-7 — J Lowe 5★
15 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Kid Ory 8, Far Ahead 7, Quilling 6

Betting: 9-2 Far Ahead, 5-1 New Century, Kid Ory, Parliament Piece, Quilling, Mister Westsound.

FORM GUIDE - NEW CENTURY: Every chance, weakened final 1, 5th btn 6l behind Moving Arrow (York 1m, Gd). QUILLING: Every chance, weakened and eased final 1, 15th btn abt 10l behind Double Splendour, with SUPERPRIDE (levels), well btn 22nd (Haydock 6f, Gd-Sft). FIELD OF VISION: Encouraging run, not quicken final 2f, 6th btn abt 7l behind Blue Bomber, with MU-ARRIK (rec 21lb), late headway, 5l 10th, KID ORY (gv 3lb), soon beaten, 11 14th and PENNY'S WISHING (rec 7lb), weakened 2f out, 23l 16th (Catterick 7f, Gd-Fm). SUPER PARK: Never reached challenging position, well btn 16th behind leader Trader (Catterick 5f, Gd-Fm). ALABANG: Well btn 18th behind Three Arch Bridge (Beverley 1m1f, Gd).

Leicester runners and riders

1.45 Diamond Beach
2.15 Tony Gift
2.45 Lady Carla
2.15 ZAJKO (nap)
3.45 Eden Heights
4.15 Hawkish

Draw: Middle to high numbers best in races up to 1m.
Going: Firm (Good to firm in places). ★ Denotes blinkers.

1.45 TUSKY MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES 2YO 6f £3,627

101 06 ANDSOME BOY (14) C Barwell 9-0 — N Adams 12
102 00 BLUE SUEDE HOOFS (11) B Meehan 9-0 — S Doyle 17
103 0 DAUPHIN (56) W Musson 9-0 — P McCabe (3) 19
104 052 DIAMOND BEACH (27) B Hills 9-0 — M Hills 2
105 05 MAC GATES (24) D Arbuthnot 9-0 — S Whitworth 11
106 005 MINORACE (3) K Ivory 9-0 — D Biggs 6
107 000 SPA LANE (14) C Dwyer 9-0 — G O'Neill (5) 2
108 52 THORNIS (24) (BF) P Makin 9-0 — K Darley 15
109 00 ASTRA MARTIN (35) P Murphy 9-0 — R Waterfield (7) 4
110 050 BEAR TO DANCE (11) John Berry 8-9 — C Dwyer 5
111 252030 NITES (24) J A Harris 8-9 — Paul Eddery 20
112 0 NAMADABULE (180) Pat Mitchell 8-9 — N Cochrane 10
113 3 BICATINKA (28) J Spearing 8-9 — S Drowne (3) 8
114 0 LAKESIDE KOPRESS (25) J Moore 8-9 — J F Egan 14
115 2600 LIA FAIL (8) R Hollinshead 8-9 — T Ives 7
116 080 LUNAR GIRL (81) J Banks 8-9 — A Clark 16
117 3 MAY QUEEN MEGAN (8) Mrs A King 8-9 — J Williams 9
118 MRS KIRKI Mrs M McCourt 8-9 — W Newnes 13
119 0 POLISH LADY (11) W Parker 8-9 — J Quinn 18
120 0 WELCOME LIZ (21) P Felgate 8-9 — A Mackay 1
20 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Thornis 8, Diamond Beach 7, Namadabule 6

1994: Sea Guns 2 0 0 Pat Eddery 3-4 (P Waleyn) 17 ran

Betting: 3-1 Diamond Beach, 5-1 Incatinka, Mac Gates, 6-1 Thornis, 7-1 May Queen Megan, 10-1 Blue Suede Hoofs.

2.15 FOSSE WAY CLAIMING STAKES 2YO 1m £2,401

201 233103 TONYS GIFT (21) R Hannon 8-12 — D O'Neill (5) 15
202 BEGGERS OPERA Pat Mitchell 8-11 — G Bardwell 10
203 042200 DANCING SIOUX (14) R Guest 8-11 — D Duffield 3
204 33324* DR CALIGARI (30) J Berry 8-10 — G Carter 11
205 BROUGHTONS CHAMP W Musson 8-9 — P McCabe (3) 7
206 00005 SHARED (28) M Madgwick 8-9 — A Mellross 17
207 40040 SIMPOSIA (14) E Alston 8-9 — S Whitworth 2
208 005105 ROMALYN (3) (D) D Morris 8-9 — J Quinn 9
209 00 OSCILIGHTS GIFT (18) P Burgoyne 8-5 — D McCabe (3) 1
210 050-000 ARMIE (40) G L Moore 8-4 — A Clark 4
211 000013 BURNT SIENNA (73) (D) J Moore 8-4 — P P Murphy (5) 20
212 005620 DOWDENCY (14) J Pickering 8-4 — J Stack (3) 8
213 200261 GECYLE (BONY 55) (D) B Meehan 8-4 — J F Egan 10★
214 0-00000 ABROVINA BUEL (8) D Wilson 8-3 — D Biggs 12
215 040004 HAVANA BEBE (8) B Palling 8-2 — T Sprake 5
216 0 ROLLING SETTLEMENT (16) J A Harris 8-2 — M Baird (5) 14
217 460 ANJOSALASA (27) J Fitch-Heyes 8-0 — D Wright (3) 13
218 005550 LYDALREE BELLE (60) Mrs A King 8-0 — S Drowne (3) 6★
219 0000-60 BELLS FLOURISHES (50) J Moore 7-12 — M Adams 18
220 0000 MOST RECORDING (14) J Arnold 7-12 — A Mackay 19★
20 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Gecile Irony 8, Burnt Sienna 7, Dr Caligari 6

1994: Happy Heritage 3 0 13 M Roberts 7-4 (M Johnston) 19 ran

Betting: 9-2 Gecile Irony, 5-1 Dr Caligari, 6-1 Tonys Gift, 8-1 Bobachyn, 10-1 Burnt Sienna, 12-1 Broughtons Champ, Havana Bebe.

2.45 ERF HOBY MAIDEN STAKES 2YO 1m £4,403

301 0 BARON HRABOVSKY (63) P Cole 9-0 — Paul Eddery 8
302 CHAUVELIN M Johnston 9-0 — M Hills 9
303 50 DESERT CAT (38) H Thomson Jones 9-0 — M Hills 12
304 000 GENERAL MACARTHUR (21) J Dunlop 9-0 — G Duffield 7
305 00 HAL HOO YAHOOH (21) Major W Hern 9-0 — T Sprake 11
306 05 HAYAAM (12) Major W Hern 9-0 — W Carson 2
307 0 IN'S GOT WINGS (7) C Brand 9-0 — M Adams 4
308 40 JEAN PIERRE (33) J Pearce 9-0 — S Drowne (3) 6
309 05 ROSEBERRY AVENUE (15) Lady Herries 9-0 — K Darley 1
310 SPARTAN HEARTBEAT C Brittain 9-0 — S Doyle 5
311 0 TAWAPEK (14) D Morley 9-0 — R Cochrane 13
312 3 FLAMING JUNE (88) H Cecil 8-9 — W Ryan 3
313 LADY CARLA H Cecil 8-9 — Pat Eddery 10
13 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Desert Cat 8, Flaming June 7

1994: Final Appearance 2 0 0 J Reid 1-2 (P Chapple-Hyam) 16 ran

Betting: 5-4 Lady Carla, 7-2 Desert Cat, 5-1 Flaming June, 6-1 Hayaam, 8-1 Chauvelin, 12-1 Baron Hrabovsky, 16-1 Spartan Heartbeat.

3.15 MARINE STREET HANDICAP 1m £4,679

401 010000 SECRET ALY (17) (D) C Brittain 5-9-10 — S Doyle 8
402 400004 RORY (17) (CD) Mrs J Cecil 4-9-10 — T Ives 15
403 104000 STAR MANAGER (17) (D) P Cole 5-9-9 — M Hills 4
404 0-01000 ZAJKO (17) (D) Lady Herries 5-9-6 — R Cochrane 12
405 024100 SAIFAN (19) (C) (D) D Morris 6-9-6 — J Stack (3) 7★
406 102410 ALDAHIS (42) (D) R Hannon 5-9-5 — D O'Neill (5) 1
407 000002 MISTY SILKS (15) (CD) (BF) M Ryan 5-9-3 — A Clark 3
408 3-46105 MONESFA (16) H Cecil 4-9-1 — Pat Eddery 2
409 412203 ROMAN REEL (21) (D) G L Moore 4-8-13 — S Whitworth 6
410 003001 SHARP CORSUL (26) H Candy 3-8-13 — W Newnes 9
411 104400 GULF SHAADI (21) (D) E Alston 5-8-7 — G Hind 11
412 602000 ABAROYSILL (14) R Simpson 4-8-2 — S Drowne (3) 10★
413 003006 ROCK OYSTER (54) B Meehan 3-7-7 — G Bardwell 5★
13 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Monesfa 8, Zajko 7, Misty Silks 6

1994: Misty Silks 4 0 3 A Clark 100-30 (M Ryan) 16 ran

Betting: 5-1 Monesfa, 6-1 Zajko, 7-1 Misty Silks, Sharp Corsul, 8-1 Rory, Secret Aly, Aldahis, Roman Reel.

3.45 BARSBY LIMITED STAKES 2YO 1m 2f 183yds £3,231

501 522100 CROSS TALK (16) R Hollinshead 9-2 — T Ives 4
502 4351 ANJOU (11) (D) J Pearce 9-0 — G Bardwell 5
503 365 DARTER (13) L Cumani 8-9 — K Darley 3
504 503213 ADAM BEDE (11) (D) B Dow 9-0 — A Daly (7) 8
505 0-600 HOUSE OF DREAMS (1) B Hills 9-0 — M Hills 2
506 00-005 NORTHERN CHAMBER (150) E Alston 9-0 — G Hind 7
507 00-50 SHAHRANI (14) M Pipe 9-0 — Pat Eddery 1
508 260300 LOVELY LYCA (28) J Hills 8-11 — R Hills 9
509 000000 PINKERTON POLKA (14) C Brittain 8-9 — S Doyle 6
9 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Eden Heights 8, Anjou 7, Lovely Lyca 6

1994: Camage 3 2 4 W Ryan 3-1 (R Hollinshead) 11 ran

Betting: 7-2 Lovely Lyca, 4-1 Eden Heights, 9-2 Anjou, 5-1 Darter, 8-1 House Of Dreams, 8-1 Cross Talk.

4.15 CASTLE HANDICAP 1m 2f £4,360

601 51-1324 WONDERFUL DAY (30) (D) (BF) T Clement 4-10-0 — T Ives 3
602 222315 DVORAK (156) R Harris 4-10-0 — A Mackay 12
603 560320- HARDING (381) S Mellor 4-9-13 — M Perrett 9
604 324150 QUESTIMATION (12) (D) J Pearce 6-9-12 — S Drowne (3) 8
605 000000 QUEENBURO (53) M Ryan 4-9-9 — A Clark 1
606 653214 NEVAL IMD (14) (D) Mrs N Macauley 7-9-6 — Amanda Sanders (7) 13
607 23401D THAMES SIDE (14) M Madgwick 4-9-5 — A Eddery (7) 14
608 240150 PISTOL (123) C Horgan 5-9-8 — Paul Eddery 17
609 151045 EL BARLADOR (28) (D) J Bethell 4-9-7 — R Hills 6
610 04-400 DUCKING (12) J Fanshawe 3-9-6 — D Harrison 16
611 323059 BRAYDON FOREST (37) C Dwyer 3-9-5 — R Cochrane 4★
612 051600 NOBLE NEPTUNE (10) W Musson 3-9-1 — G Carter 3
613 110300 ROCK THE BARNEY (8) (CD) P Burgoyne 8-9-0 — D McCabe (3) 19
614 536515 YO KIRI-B (72) J Fitch-Heyes 4-8-12 — G Duffield 5
615 423142 HAWKISH (8) (CD) D Morley 6-8-12 — W Carson 7
616 113405 KIWTWYN (21) C Elsey 5-8-11 — M Hills 15
617 340330 SALTANDO (12) Pat Mitchell 4-8-11 — D O'Neill (5) 11
618 020420 DIA GHORRY (32) Mrs N Macauley 4-8-7 — DOUBTFUL 13
619 00200-0 BOLD ACRE (263) D Burchell 5-8-6 — R Price 10
18 runners

TOP FORM TIPS: Thames Side 8, Noval Imd 7, Hawkish 6

1994: Son Of Sharp Shot 4 1 0 0 Pat Eddery 13-8 (J Dunlop) 18 ran

Betting: 6-1 Thames Side, 7-1 Hawkish, 8-1 Neval Imd, 10-1 Dvorak, Pistol, Wonderful Day, Yo Kiri-B, 12-1 Harding.

● Blinkered today for the first time: LEICESTER: 2.15 Most Becoming; 4.15 Braydon Forest. REDCAR: 1.30 Lady Eclat, Jive Baby; 3.30 King Chestnut.

Results

LEICESTER

1.15 (1m): 1, CICERONE, D Sweeney (7-1 jt fav); 2, Mighty Kingdom (10-1); 3, Bivouac (20-1); 4, Anotherone To Note (20-1). 7-1 jt fav Cozdem. 19 ran. Hd, 2l. (J L Harris) Tote: £5.00; £1.30, £5.00, £10.00. £4.70. Dual F: £53.60. CSF: £75.59. Trioast: £1,249.32. NR: Miss Iron Heart.

1.45 (7f): 1, DANCE ON A CLOUD, M Hills (10-1); 2, Apache Lee (6-1); 3, Danish Circus (3-1). 9-4 fav Name of Our Father. 11 ran. 2, 1¾. (M Stoute) Tote: £7.20; £2.10, £2.10, £1.60. Dual F: £31.20. CSF: £65.56. Trio: £32.30.

2.15 (7f): 1, WORLDWIDE BLISS, A Mackay (6-1); 2, Dancing Destiny (11-2); 3, Cobweb (9-2 fav). 12 ran. 1, nk. (R Harris) Tote: £7.30; £2.60, £2.60, £2.40. Dual F: £23.30. CSF: £35.57. Trioast: £150.38. Trio: £45.60. NR: Northern Clan.

2.45 (5f 218yds): 1, WILDWOOD FLOWER, D O'Neill (6-1); 2, Sonsara (14-1); 3, Stately Dancer (3-1 fav). 15 ran. 3¼, 1¾. (R Hannon) Tote: £6.70; £1.50, £6.40, £2.00. Dual F: £84.20. CSF: £94.31. Trio: £93.80.

3.15 (1m 3f 183yds)

Soccer

Leeds step up Brolin chase

Ian Ross

TOMAS BROLIN could be the next player of world renown to grace the Premiership. The Leeds United manager Howard Wilkinson confirmed yesterday that he is attempting to lure the Swedish international forward away from Parma.

Negotiations between the clubs opened in earnest last week. Although Leeds's initial offer of £4 million was rejected, Wilkinson is likely to ask his board of directors to sanction an increased bid of around £5 million.

"We have inquired about Tomas Brolin but we have been told that, at the moment, he is not for sale," said Wilkinson.

Wilkinson believes that the 25-year-old Brolin would prove to be an effective foil and partner for Tony Yeboah, who has scored eight of Leeds's 14 league goals this season.

Although Brolin is one of Italy's highest paid players with an estimated annual income in excess of £1 million, he has never made a secret of his desire to play in England.

Leeds recently made a £5 million bid for Brolin's Parma team-mate Faustino Asprilla, the Colombian international forward.

Richard Jobson yesterday completed the formalities of his transfer between Oldham Athletic and Leeds, three months after a similar move had collapsed in acrimonious circumstances because he was said to be suffering from a blood disorder.

The First Division club has received a fee of £800,000 with the promise of a further £200,000 if Jobson can help Leeds to qualify for Europe next season.

"He will be thinking that good things do eventually come to those who wait patiently," said Wilkinson. "I am delighted for him and delighted for myself because I have brought to this club a quality footballer."

Bolton Wanderers have made a bid of around £800,000 for Mike Newell, the disenchanted Blackburn Rovers striker.

Liverpool and Manchester United have both officially lodged their interest in Lee Bowyer, the Charlton Athletic midfielder who is conservatively valued at £2 million. The Liverpool manager Roy Evans saw Bowyer score Charlton's goal in Saturday's 1-1 draw with Norwich City.

John Harkes, the United States international, is joining West Ham on loan for the rest of the season and is set to make his debut at Sheffield Wednesday, his first English club, on Saturday.

The American utility player is due to return home in April for the new national league after a £500,000 deal between Derby and the US Soccer Federation. But he is free to continue in English football until then and will be allowed to stay at Upton Park until May if West Ham are still in the FA Cup or fighting relegation.

Juninho . . . in the clear

Juninho cleared to face United

Russell Thomas and Ian Ross

JUNINHO was yesterday cleared to make his debut for Middlesbrough against Manchester United at Old Trafford on Saturday after the Department of Employment announced he had been granted a work permit.

After signing for the Teesside club for a fee of £4.75 million last week the Brazilian returned to Sao Paulo.

"He is still out in Brazil and we will now make travel arrangements for him to return to England very quickly," said Viv Anderson, Middlesbrough's assistant manager, last night.

Earlier yesterday Bryan Robson warned that he would need Juninho to land in England by tomorrow morning if he is to face Eric Cantona and company.

Robson, preparing for tomorrow's Coca-Cola Cup tie at Crystal Palace, said: "He would have to arrive by Wednesday morning to have any chance at all of appearing against United. You can't expect him to step off a plane, get over jet-lag and play in a game as fast and competitive as this one if he's not ready."

Boro's manager denied that he is trying to complete a Brazilian double by signing the young forward Caio, Juninho's Sao Paulo team-mate. Instead Caio is a probable target for another Englishman, new Internazionale manager Roy Hodgson, after a lengthy pursuit of the player by the Milan club.

Barry Venison became a Southampton player yesterday after his ill-fated three months in Turkey, and he could soon take over the captaincy to help revive the fortunes of the South Coast club and, in particular, Matthew Le Tissier.

Southampton's manager Dave Merrington is planning no drastic action to restore Le Tissier's confidence after his current captain's dispiriting season reached its lowest point with his sending-off against Liverpool on Sunday.

But, as Merrington welcomed Venison's arrival for £750,000 from Graeme Souness's Galatasaray, he cited the 31-year-old former Newcastle captain's experience and leadership capabilities.

"We have signed a player with great leadership qualities," said Merrington. "We have many young players who will respond to those. There are not many players who can lead as Venison does."

Lawrie McMenemy, Southampton's director of football, scoffed at suggestions that the club might finally be prepared to part with Le Tissier.

"It's farcical to bring up the question of him leaving at a time when he is going through a poor spell . . . we are a family club and he's very much part of that family and we will resolve this little difficulty among ourselves."

Glenn Hoddle's admiration of Le Tissier, and the £5 million just made available for new players by Chelsea's benefactor Matthew Harding, will renew speculation of a new career at Stamford Bridge.

Dancing with Wolves becomes more an ordeal

Graham Taylor, left, finds himself facing familiar music at Molineux

Report by Derek Lawrenson

NINETEEN months ago Middlesbrough and Wolves were the desperate inmates of the First Division, on the look-out for a man who could bring them merciful release. Topping the Molineux shortlist was Bryan Robson but the Wolves board decided that it could not meet his demands. So they went instead for Graham Taylor. One could say it has proved to be a costly decision.

On Saturday the contrasting fortunes of the two clubs since will be summed up when both take on sides called United. Robson's Middlesbrough, to the accompaniment of unprecedented media hoo-haa, will play Manchester of that ilk; Wolves, backed solely by the increasing hostility of their own fans, will play Sheffield.

Robson's rising stock is reflected by his place in the England management set-up; Taylor's fall is mirrored in days that recall his England nightmare. Once more he is to be found spending long hours in dug-outs complete with glum expression, hand on his chin and probably uttering the remark that he turned into a national catchphrase.

Yet 12 months ago the days of "Do I Not Like That?" appeared to have been banished forever as Taylor took Wolves to the top of the First Division. An unblemished managerial record at club level had seemingly been resumed without so much as a skip in his stride.

Then promotion was lost amid a stream of injuries and loss of nerve, and so far this season Wolves have been a mess. Despite possessing five players who cost more than £1 million apiece they are 15th in a desperately poor division with only 14 points from 13 games. To make matters worse West Bromwich Albion, with a fraction of Wolves's advantages, lie third, 10 points better off. Birmingham City are fourth. The

Wolves fans are dealing with all this in time-honoured fashion: "We Want, Taylor Out" has become the second most popular chant behind the perennial chart-topper, "Shit on the Baggies".

The club's response has been to close ranks. Taylor, who curtailed a press conference because he did not like the tone of a reporter's questioning and walked out of another, now frequently cancels his Friday meetings with the Midlands media.

The chairman Jonathan Hayward deflects questions on the manager's future. The owner Sir Jack Hayward did declare that Taylor was the best manager in the country.

Despite this proclamation, however, nobody doubts that come next March, if Wolves have no chance of promotion, Taylor will not see out the last year of his contract. Rumours persist that, if that comes to pass, the former Arsenal manager George Graham will step in once he completes his year-long ban from the game.

The club are Wolves by nature as well as name, and that is how it has to be with a budget built round the need for Premiership football. Given the surroundings, the resources and the fact that Wolves attract more supporters than all but a handful of clubs, it is hardly surprising the place is seething with discontent.

Nothing arouses wrath like dashed expectations and Wolves began in August with the sort of hopes shared only by the blessed few. With only three victories to cheer from the first 13 league games, the angst of the home crowd is such that Taylor believes the team are currently better off playing away from Molineux, an opinion supported by recent results. This week, then, is a key week. Beginning tomorrow night against Charlton, Wolves have two home games in four days.

There were many disenchanted voices to be heard at Molineux when Taylor was appointed. Naturally these died down when Wolves did enough from his first 11 games to move from mid-table to the verge of the play-offs.

Money was duly provided to justify Wolves' position as promotion favourites the following season. When it did not happen Taylor appeased the faithful by pointing out that Wolves had reached the FA Cup quarter-finals and had finished higher in the League than at any time since 1984.

Given that almost an entire team of players had gone under the surgeon's knife at some point during the season the disappointment was assuaged by the promise that this would finally be their year. It still could turn out that way, of course. Don Goodman and Dean Richards are two of Taylor's successful buys while Tony Daley is starting to show some form. Mark Atkins, persuaded to leave the champions Blackburn, has also begun well.

Nevertheless, the feeling persists that Wolves are in for an uncomfortable winter. For a start, Taylor continues to be hounded by ill-luck. Stephen Froggatt, a player full of promise at Aston Villa, has hardly played consecutive games since his arrival at Molineux and will be out until at least Christmas with a debilitating virus.

Geoff Thomas, following a sixth knee operation, will be lucky to play again. The goalkeeper Mike Stowell smashed a cheekbone in Wolves' last home game in a collision with one of his own players, Eric Young. Then there is the difficulty of overcoming the crowd's loss of faith.

In his programme notes a month ago Taylor used his entire column to thank everyone at the club, from the security guard to the kit man. It read like the words of a man resigned to his fate.

Transfers

In:	
Stephen Froggatt (Aston Villa)	£1.1m
Tony Daley (Aston Villa)	£1.3m
Neil Emblen (Millwall)	£600,000
John de Wolf (Feyenoord)	£600,000
Don Goodman (Sunderland)	£1,100,000
Gordon Cowans (Derby Co)	£25,000
Brian Law (QPR)	£130,000
Dean Richards (Bradford C)	£1.35m
Mark Atkins (Blackburn)	£1m
Mark Williams (RWD Molenbeek)	£300,000
Jermaine Wright (Millwall)	£50,000
Eric Young (Crystal Palace)	free
Total	£7,555,000

Out:	
Kevin Keen (Stoke)	£300,000
Paul Cook (Coventry)	£600,000
Lee Mills (Derby)	£400,000
Chris Marsden (Notts Co)	£150,000
Paul Blades (Rotherham?)	£110,000
Tom Bennett (Stockport)	£75,000
Peter Shirtliff (Barnsley)	£120,000
David Kelly (Sunderland)	£300,000
Total	£2,655,000

Faithful to the last . . . a fan remembers better days at Molineux PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

FA unmoved as League plays for time over TV deal

Martin Thorpe

THE survival of the Football League's 72 clubs was held in the hands of six of their chairmen yesterday, each caught in a dilemma.

The six comprise the Football League board, who met with their president Gordon McKeag in London yesterday. Three weeks ago the Football Association offered the League a £117 million five-year tv deal, stipulating that a decision must be made by this Thursday.

But the League wants more time to weigh up the as-yet unspecified counter-offer for tv rights from the Premier League. The money is crucial to the ailing finances of many smaller clubs.

But if the Football League say no to the FA the offer is likely to be withdrawn. If they say yes, they will miss out on a potentially more lucrative Premier League deal.

Yesterday the FA's commercial director Trevor Phillips, who put together the governing body's offer, was playing hardball over any extension of his deadline. "There is no flexibility on the deadline," he said, adding that the FA had no hidden agenda. "If the Football League do not say yes before Thursday, that would be the end of our offer.

"The fact that they want to measure it against the Premier League is hardly my problem. What do I do? Delay the deadline? I can't expect somebody to keep that sort of money on the table."

That somebody is, basically, Rupert Murdoch and Sky whose cash will finance the bulk of the deal in return for showing Football League games.

Phillips . . . playing hardball

However, the PL also envisage selling Football League games to Sky, and as the satellite channel are anxious to retain Premiership coverage, the Football League would be in a strong bargaining position if they teamed up with the PL.

But while there have been useful preliminary discussions between the PL and Football League, more time is needed to work out details. So, despite Phillips's stance, the League is expected to ask for more time when they meet the FA this morning.

Yesterday Fulham's Jimmy Hill, one of the six chairmen, said: "My view would be that there is no way we can take this offer if we're doing out duty by the clubs. We must wait to compare it and not be hurried."

The FA's offer basically comprises: £117 million to the Football League over the next five years in return for all the League's commercial rights, especially tv rights to League and Coca-Cola Cup games which will be sold as a package with England and FA Cup matches. Live Football League games would go out on Sky with the FA Cup final possibly going out live on ITV.

The PL's offer is: an unspecified slice of the estimated £500 million-plus which the next Premiership deal will be worth. Premiership, Football League and Coca-Cola games packaged together leading to Football League games live on Sky, including on Friday nights and blank international weekends.

So why is the Football League suddenly so popular? Primarily the FA and PL both recognise the need to close the growing financial gap between Premiership and First Division.

Ignoring it would increase the pressure on the First Division chairmen to break away and take the tv money currently divided among the three divisions for themselves.

But by using their respective influence and leverage, the FA and PL can maximise the value of the Football League's tv rights so that First Division clubs could receive up to £1 million each compared with £200,000 under the existing ITV deal.

Current levels of handout to the bottom two divisions could be maintained or marginally increased.

"I feel very strongly that the function of the FA as a governing body should be to look at all opportunities to strengthen the broad base of the professional game," says Phillips. "We need to close the gap at the top without increasing the gap at the bottom."

The Premier League's offer is born from what their chief executive Rick Parry describes as "enlightened self-interest.

"We recognise the importance of having a healthy game from top to bottom," he says.

Teamtalk

The Independent News Reports Service

Call 0891 33 77+

Arsenal	06	Ipswich Town	19	Sheffield United	15
Aston Villa	11	Leeds United	03	Sheffield Wed.	14
Birm. City	34	Leicester City	35	Southhampton	20
Blackburn	21	Liverpool	04	Stoke City	30
Bolton	36	Man. City	02	Sunderland	27
Brentford	24	Man. United	01	Tottenham Hot.	07
Burnley	31	Middlesbrough	23	West Ham	12
Chelsea	08	Millwall	29	Wimbledon	26
Coventry City	17	Newcastle Utd	16	Wolves	37
Derby County	28	Norwich City	18	Celtic	09
Everton	05	Notts Forest	13	Rangers	10
Hudd. Town	32	QPR	25		

Sport The Guardian

Calls cost 39p min cheap rate, 49p min at all other times. Supplied by IMS, 15 Mark Lane, London EC3R 7LB. Helpline 0171 713 4273

Results

Soccer

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier Division: Postponed: Purfleet v Worthing.
TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP DRAWS: First round (to be played Dec 9): Stenhousemuir v Arbroath; Glasgow Univ v Spartans; Albion v Deveronvale; Stranraer v Livingston. **Second round** (to be played Jan 6): Ayr v Ross; Forfar v Lossiemouth, East Stirling v Stenhousemuir or Arbroath; Glasgow Univ or Spartans v East Fife; Albion or Deveronvale v Keith; Montrose v Cowdenbeath; Caledonian v Stranraer or Livingston; Whitehill Wel v Fraserburgh; Clyde v Brechin, Queen of South v Queen's Park; Stirling v Alloa; Berwick v Annan

Golf

TEXAS OPEN (San Antonio): **Final** scores (US unless stated): **268** D Waldorf 66, 66 71, 65. **274** J Leonard 67, 70, 69, 68. **280** J Morse 70, 69, 71, 70; J Mahaffey 67, 71 71 71; L Roberts 64, 72, 73, 71. **281** M Standly 68, 71, 74, 68; J D Blake 67, 67, 70, 77. **282** J Haas 68, 65, 74, 72. **283** M Wiebe 74, 69, 70, 70; L Rinker 70, 66, 72, 75. **284** S Jones 70, 73, 73, 68; B Bryant 67, 72, 73, 72. **285** B McCallister 68, 73, 73, 71; J McGovern 72, 70, 71, 72. **286** P Stewart 69, 71, 78, 68. P Azinger 68, 74, 76, 68; M Brisky 74, 65, 77, 70; T Armour III 69, 71, 75 71; D Hammond 65 76, 74, 71; K Perry 69, 72 74, 71; O Uresti 72, 70, 71, 73. **Also 289** S Ramsul (Aus) 76, 68, 76, 71. **298** D Faherty (GB) 71, 73, 75, 79

Tennis

BISSEN OPEN (Germany): **First round: M Gustafsson** (Swe) bt A Krickstein (US) 6-4 6-2; **M Washington** (US) bt N Kiefer (Ger) 3-6, 6-0, 6-4. **A Volkov** (Rus) bt A Berasategui (Sp) 7-6, 6-2; **J Stingh** (Neth) bt B Karbacher (Ger) 6-2, 6-4.

Baseball

WORLD SERIES: Atlanta Braves 4, Cleveland Indians 3 (Braves lead series 2-0).

Basketball

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Men: First Division: Cardiff 79, Coventry 104; Nottingham 75, Mid Sussex 82; Solent 75, Crystal Palace 57; Stockton 87, Ware 92. **Women: First Division:** Ipswich 72, Plymouth 44; Northampton 58, Birmingham 63, Rhondda 69, Nottingham 46; Tyne & Wear 69, London 97.

Chess

OWENS CORNING INTERNATIONAL (Wrexham): **Sixth round standings:** I Csom (Hun) 4; C Hartman (Swe) 3½ (1 unf); J Howell (Eng) 3½. D Bronstein (Rus), M Pein, N McDonald, N Davies (Eng) 3; E Martinovsky (US) 2½ (1 unf).
RICHMOND INTERNATIONAL (Barnet): **Second round standings:** G Welling (Neth), C Maduegwe (Nig). A Tritunovic (Eng) 1½; K Berg (Den), A Summerscale, R Bates, L McShane, S Williams (Eng) 1.

American Football

NFL: Carolina 20, New Orleans 3; Chicago 35, Houston 32; Jacksonville 23, Cleveland 16; New York Jets 17, Miami 16; San Francisco 44, St Louis 10; Atlanta 34, Tampa Bay 21; Washington 36, Detroit 30 (ot). Kansas City 21, Denver 7; Green Bay 38, Minnesota 21. Oakland 30, Indianapolis 17; San Diego 35, Seattle 28.

Ice Hockey

NHL: Buffalo 5, St Louis 2; Ottawa 4, New York Rangers 2; Anaheim 6, Winnipeg 2; San Jose 1, Edmonton 1 (ot); Chicago 6, Philadelphia 4.

Motor Sport

CATALONIA RALLY: Leading positions (after nine special stages): 1. J Kankkunen (Fin) Toyota Celica 1hr 45min 13sec; 2. C Sainz (Sp) Subaru Impreza at 22sec; 3. A Schwarz (Ger) Toyota Celica 38; 4. C McRae (GB) Subaru Impreza 41; 5. D Auriol (Fr) Toyota Celica 58; 6. F Delecour (Fr) Ford Escort 1.13; 7. P Liatti (It) Subaru Impreza 1.16; 8. A Aghini (It) Mitsubishi Lancer 1.45; 9. T Makinen (Fin) Mitsubishi Lancer 1.47; 10. G Trelles (Uru) Toyota Celica 2.36.

Snooker

SKODA GRAND PRIX (Sunderland): **Third round: S Davis** (Eng) bt M Stevens (Wales) 5-2.

Fixtures

(7.30 unless stated)

ENGLISH COCA-COLA CUP: Third round: Barnsley v Arsenal (7.45); Birmingham v Tranmere (7.45); Bolton v Leicester (7.45); Reading v Bury (7.45); Watford v Blackburn (7.45)
SCOTTISH COCA-COLA CUP: Semi-final: Rangers v Aberdeen (8.0).
AITKO WHITECROSS SHIELD: Northern Section: Group Four: First round: Rochdale v Darlington.
FA CUP: Fourth-round qualifying replays: Colwyn Bay v Stalybridge, Rushden & D'monds v Purfleet; Wisbech v Billericay Tn; Bromsgrove v Kettering; Bashley v Newport IoW. Marlow v Gravesend & Northfleet.
GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE: Runcorn v Macclesfield (7.45).
UNIBOND LEAGUE CHALLENGE CUP: Second round: Atherton LR v Winsford Utd; Barrow v Accrington Stanley; Chorley v Marine, Colwyn Bay v Droylsden; Eastwood Tn v Alfreton Tn; Harrogate Tn v Emley; Lancaster C v Knowsley Utd; Leek Tn v Buxton; Matlock Tn v Gainsborough Trin; Witton Alb v Leigh; Workington v Bamber Bridge; Worksop Tn v Boston Utd.
ICIS LEAGUE: Premier Division: Chertsey Tn v Hayes (7.45); Hitchin v St Albans; Sutton Utd v Harrow Bor. **Second Division:** Banstead Ath v Egham Tn, Chalfont St Peter v Collier Row. **Third Division:** Southall v Hornchurch; Wealdstone v Apsley.
BEAZER HOMES LEAGUE: Premier Division: Atherstone v Stafford; Baldock Tn v Hastings; Cambridge C v VS Rugby; Cheltenham v Halesowen (7.45); Gresley Rvrs v Ilkeston Tn. **Midland Division:** Bedworth Utd v Leicester Utd; Bridgnorth Tn v Dudley Tn. Buckingham Tn v Corby Tn; Hinckley Tn v Moor Green, Kings Lynn v Grantham Tn; RC Warwick v Nuneaton Bor; Redditch Utd v Pagel Rngrs; Stourbridge v Tamworth, Sutton Coldfield Tn v Bilston Tn. **Southern Division:** Ashford Tn v Braintree Tn; Bashley v Havant Tn; Cinderford Tn v Trowbridge Tn; Erith & Belvedere v Waterlooville; Margate v Fisher 83; Tonbridge Angels v Sittingbourne; Weston-S-Mare v Yate Tn; Weymouth v Clevedon Tn; Witney Tn v Forest Grn Rvrs.
N-W COUNTIES LEAGUE: First Division: Blackpool Rvrs v Clitheroe, Darwen v Rossendale Utd. Eastwood Hanley v Maine Rd; Flixton v Newcastle Tn; Moseley v Trafford; Salford C v Prescot. **Premier Trophy: First-round, second leg:** Glossop NE v Chadderton.
NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Presidents Cup: Second round: Armthorpe Wel v Heanor Main; Arnold Tn v Belper Tn; Liversedge v Hallam, N Ferriby Utd v Selby Tn; Ossett Tn v Harrogate RA; Parkgate v Borrowash Vic; Pickering Tn v Garforth Tn; Pontefract Col v Thackley, Tadcaster Alb v Goole Tn; Yorkshire Am v Ossett Alb
GREAT MILLS LEAGUE: Premier Division: Backwell Utd v Frome Tn; Chippenham Tn v Taunton Tn; Mangotsfield Utd v Calne Tn; Odd Down Ath v Paulton Rvrs.
PONTINS LEAGUE: First Division: Man City v Mansfield (6.45) **Third Division:** Chesterfield v Wrexham (7.0).
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First Division: Bristol C v Southampton; Portsmouth v Swindon (7.0); QPR v Millwall (7.0); West Ham v Arsenal (7.0).
League Cup: Plymouth v Torquay (2.0).
SPRINGHEATH PRINT CAPITAL LEAGUE: Crawley Tn v Wokingham Tn.
LEAGUE OF WALES CUP: Group Two: Round One: Connah's Quay v Holywell, Rhyl v Flint Tn. **Group Three: Round One:** Llansantffraid v Newtown. **Group Four: Round One:** Barry Tn v Alan Lido. **Group Five: Round One:** Inter Cardiff v Ton Pentre.
SUN LIFE GOLD CUP: Quarter-finals: Crusaders v Bangor; Linfield v Glenloran.

Rugby Union

CLUB MATCHES: Ebbw Vale v Mountain Ash (7.0); Maesteg v Kenfig Hill (7.15); Oxford Univ v Wasps (7.15), Tredegar v Cross Keys (7.0).

Rugby League

***HALIFAX EMERGING NATIONS* WORLD CUP: Finals:** Cook Islands v Ireland (Bury FC).

Basketball

EUROPEAN CUP: Third round, first leg: Sheffield v Sunair Ostende (8.0).

Cricket

TOUR MATCH (one day): **Randjesfontein:** NPO XI v England (8.0am).

● Two Americans have tested positive for pseudoephedrine, the first drug cases in beach volleyball. Mike Whitmarsh and Scott Friederichsen, who failed tests taken at a World Championship Series event at Hermosa Beach in July, have been stripped of their ranking points and prize money from the event but will not have to serve the mandatory three-month suspension because certain "formalities" were not respected by the US national federation.

● Kent County Cricket Club have named Robin Baker White, the county's High Sheriff, as their president for 1996. Baker White, aged 63, is a direct descendant of William De Chair Baker the first secretary of the club, who served from 1870 to 1875.

Pools Forecast

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

1	Aston Villa	v Everton	1
2	Blackburn	v Chelsea	1
3	Leeds	v Coventry	1
4	Liverpool	v Man City	1
5	Man Utd	v Middlesbro	1
6	QPR	v Nottm Forest	x
7	Sheff Wed	v West Ham	x
8	Wimbledon	v Southampton	1

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION

9	Grimsby	v Stoke	1
10	Leicester	v C Palace	1
11	Millwall	v West Brom	1
12	Portsmouth	v Watford	x
13	Reading	v Ipswich	1
14	Southend	v Huddersfield	2
15	Sunderland	v Barnsley	x
16	Wolves	v Sheff Utd	1

SECOND DIVISION

17	Blackpool	v Oxford	1
18	Bournemouth	v Carlisle	1
19	Bradford C	v Burnley	x
20	Brighton	v Bristol R	2
21	Bristol C	v Walsall	1
22	Crewe	v Brentford	1
23	Notts Co	v Swindon	x
24	Peterborough	v York	1
25	Shrewsbury	v Rotherham	2
26	Stockport	v Chesterfield	2
27	Wrexham	v Swansea	1
28	Wycombe	v Hull	1

THIRD DIVISION

29	Cardiff	v Colchester	x
30	Darlington	v Plymouth	x
31	Doncaster	v Preston	x
32	Exeter	v Lincoln	1
33	Fulham	v Hereford	1
34	Hartlepool	v Gillingham	2
35	Leyton O	v Wigan	x
36	Mansfield	v Bury	1
37	Northampton	v Barnet	1
38	Rochdale	v Cambridge	1
39	Scarborough	v Chester	2
40	Torquay	v Scunthorpe	1

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

41	Celtic	v Aberdeen	x
42	Falkirk	v Hearts	2
43	Hibernian	v Kilmarnock	1
44	Partick	v Motherwell	2
45	Raith Rvrs	v Rangers	2

SCOTTISH FIRST DIVISION

46	Airdrie	v Dundee	1
47	Clydebank	v Hamilton	1
48	Dunfermline	v G Morton	2
49	Dundee Utd	v Dumfermline	x
50	St Johnstone	v St Mirren	1

SCOTTISH SECOND DIVISION

51	Ayr Utd	v East Fife	2
52	Forfar	v Clyde	1
53	Queen of South	v Montrose	1
54	Stirling A	v Berwick	2
55	Stranraer	v Stenhousemuir	2

SCOTTISH THIRD DIVISION

56	Albion R	v Alloa	2
57	Brechin	v Caledonian	1
58	Cowdenbeath	v Queen Pk	1

In from the cold . . . Nasser Hussain returns to international cricket after a two-year exile and feels, at 27, that his time has come PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Hussain ready to seize the moment

Paul Weaver finds the Essex batsman bursting with runs, maturity and excitement as he heads for Pakistan as England A captain

IT WAS the best of times for Nasser Hussain. It was Trent Bridge, in the summer of 1993, and he had just returned to the England side and dominated an Australian attack for whom Shane Warne and Merv Hughes had already established a massive psychological advantage in the Ashes series.

"Looking back at that match I would say they were the best five days of my life. Graham Gooch, my Essex captain at the time, was leading England and Keith Fletcher was manager. Everything fitted.

"I scored 71 in the first innings and almost made another half-century with an unbeaten knock in the second. I batted for a long time with Graham Thorpe and we nearly won the game. We were a young side restoring some pride after a difficult series.

"Then I got back to the Royal Hotel and everyone was slapping me on the back and saying 'well played' and then I saw it again on the TV news. I did not quite feel an established member of the England side but I certainly felt I was getting there."

As Hussain watched the highlights of his own innings in Nottingham that evening with the gleam of destiny in his eye he could hardly have guessed that he was heading for the international wilderness. He has not played for England since that high summer. He went to West Indies the following winter but did not play in a Test. He has not had a single call-up in the last two summers and last winter there was not even an England A place.

Now the selectors have again recognised one of the country's brightest batting talents and the repairs he has made to his technique in the past year. He will captain the England A party that flies out to Pakistan on Thursday.

"I didn't really hear my name when I listened to Radio 5 the other week. Like everyone else I was hoping for a trip to South Africa. That didn't happen, so I listened to the A side and, because my name normally comes somewhere in the middle, I didn't catch it at the top.

"Then I heard it again and it sunk in. After the disappointment of missing out on South Africa it was brilliant, particularly the captaincy bit. Whether it's England A, B or C it's captaining a representative side and that's a position of high responsibility.

"I can't complain about missing out on the senior tour. I will always back myself to score runs for England, particularly after this year when I've played as well as I've ever played. But if you talk to almost any county cricketer he will tell you that they have picked the best seven batsmen for South Africa with the possible exceptions of Goochie and Mike Gatting who were not really available anyway.

"I can't grumble when I lose out to Mark Ramprakash and John Crawley because they are two fine players. Anyone who scores over 2,000 runs, as Mark has done after making a Test pair at Lord's, has shown a lot of character. He has done more than he needed to.

"But the one time in my career when I did feel unlucky was two years ago. I thought I might have had a chance in the West Indies and, when I came back to England, the likes of Gooch and Gatting were back in the frame. I didn't respond the right way. I was stupid. I lost heart. I should have gritted my teeth and said 'I'll show 'em' but instead I thought I would never get back in the England side. The result was that last year I had a poor season."

In 1994 he made only 789 championship runs at an average of 29.22. "I was content to score a flashy 30 or 40, hit a few fours, entertain the crowd and curse my luck when I got out."

Last winter, though, proved to be a pivotal period in Hussain's career. He spent two months with the video and bowling machines at Chelmsford, talking to Gooch and Fletcher and eradicating the exaggerated movement in the crease which is the blight of any batsman who has lost his touch. He also talked to his father Joe, who is still the nearest thing he has to a mentor in the game. Then he spent a further two months in South Africa, playing for Stellenbosch University and putting into practice his new technique.

"Something else happened in South Africa. I would meet Brits over there and all they were talking about was the Ashes series in Australia. We would go into a pub or club and watch Thorpy batting or Goughy running in and it reminded me how important it was to people outside the game and it gave me a burning ambition to get back there."

While in South Africa he was also offered the Essex vice-captaincy by Paul Prichard. "Unlike John Stephenson I never had a great desire to be captain. But I enjoyed skippering Durham University for three years and also England Schools. I didn't hesitate about the job and have enjoyed being involved in chats about pitches, selections and signings. But I did feel dubious about batting at three. I really wanted to bat at four but, because Mark Waugh has had to do a lot of bowling, we thought he would go four.

"I've blossomed at first wicket down. My target was 1,500 runs but I've topped 1,800 and what most pleased me was that I occupied the crease for long periods."

The vice-captaincy offer may have surprised some people in view of the fact Hussain, 27, has twice been disciplined by Essex for his outspokenness. "One of those times was a misunderstanding. But I did have a personality clash with Neil Foster. The trouble is that I said a few things out of turn. I wasn't really senior enough to say the things I did. Now I feel I am. I feel it is my time."

Taylor stands his ground as Pakistan arrive

Neil Robinson

PAKISTAN arrive in Australia today aware that their decision to include Salim Malik in a 17-man squad has guaranteed them a hot and probably hostile reception.

Yesterday Australia's captain Mark Taylor declared that he would stand by his men after his spinners Shane Warne and Tim May were accused by a Pakistan judge of appearing to concoct bribery allegations against Malik.

"I believe what they said and I back my players," Taylor said, referring to allegations that Malik offered the pair money to bowl poorly during a match between the two countries last year.

Taylor acknowledged Malik's selection could lead to confrontation between the two sides. "There may be heated moments but I'm sure both sides will concentrate on the cricket," he said.

Neither Warne nor May would comment on Malik's inclusion in the squad but Taylor said it did not "really surprise" him. "We just want to get out there now and play cricket. Pakistan can pick whoever they like. Malik has been cleared of any allegations, so we've just got to get on with the game and make sure we play the sort of cricket we played in the West Indies."

Pakistan may have to wait until the three-Test series starts at The Gabba in Brisbane on November 9 to catch their first glimpse of Warne, who was yesterday withdrawn from the Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI to play the tourists in their opening game on Thursday.

Trevor Hohns, the chairman of the Australian selection panel, said that the selectors had discussed the matter with Warne before making their decision. "Although Shane is quite fit, we felt it better that he did not participate in this fixture," Hohns said.

"We believe it is in the best interests of the Australian team and Shane for him to remain in Melbourne with the Victorian squad and avoid the trip across the Nullarbor for a one-off match at this time of the season."

● Kent have named Robin Baker White, the current High Sheriff of Kent, as their president for 1996.

American Football

Rams fleeced by rampant 49ers

Mark Tran in New York

THE RAMS may have rediscovered the delights of winning in the shadow of St Louis' Gateway Arch but the gulf in class between them and San Francisco 49ers remains as wide as the Golden Gate.

Their move to the banks of the Mississippi from the Anaheim suburb of Los Angeles, where they lost on the eight occasions they met the 49ers, made no difference to the outcome as the Rams were trounced 44–10.

Untypical mistakes cost the Rams dear as the Super Bowl champions turned four interceptions into touchdowns, either directly or on the next play. Two were claimed by the defenseman Ken Norton Jnr running the ball back and he celebrated his first in keeping with family traditions by pummelling the Rams' goal post as if it were a punch bag.

In their three previous victories the Rams had conceded no turnovers and they had high hopes of reversing the losing trend against the 49ers in their last game at Busch Stadium before they move to the new Trans World Dome.

The omens were good; San Francisco had suffered a surprise defeat to the Indianapolis Colts the week before and lost their quarterback Steve Young with a shoulder injury, with the inexperienced Eric Grbac taking his place.

But the Rams' confidence was swiftly deflated when their quarterback Chris Miller's pass was cut out by the former London Monarchs player Dedrick Dodge. From the next play Grbac found John Taylor for a 34-yard touchdown. Then Norton capitalised on another Rams' error and thereafter there was only one team in it.

San Francisco are now tied for first place in the NFC West with the Rams and the Atlanta Falcons but will need to be at their best next Sunday when they face Dallas Cowboys at the Texas Stadium.

It was a good day for the Jacksonville Jaguars. The expansion club defeated the Cleveland Browns 28–15, raising hopes in South Carolina that their team might make the play-offs in the first year of their existence.

Ice Hockey

Heavey makes light of Devilishly high expectations

Vic Batchelder

WHEN the Cardiff Devils' founding father John Lawless left the club during the summer to become coach and general manager of the newly formed Manchester Storm, many Devils fans feared the worst. They can rest easier now.

"It's very pleasing to wake up on a Monday morning and see you're sitting on top of the league," Lawless's successor Paul Heavey said yesterday.

The Devils recovered from Saturday's 6–3 defeat at Sheffield to beat the Humberside Hawks 3–2 in Hull on Sunday. Ivan Matulik, Mike Ware and Ian Cooper got the goals and, along with Steve Moria, Ian's brother Stephen, Shannon Hope and Doug McEwen, they provide what Heavey claims is the "quality in the side that means we've probably got the most talented team".

The Nottingham Panthers, who maintained their 100 per cent record with a 6–2 home win over the Durham Wasps, may dispute that.

"It's going to be so tough this year," Heavey acknowledged. "There's still a lot to be worked on as far as the team is concerned."

The Basingstoke Bison, a team with a proliferation of Canadian-raised players, added another, Kevin Forrest, for Saturday's game against the Fife Flyers in Kirkcaldy. The Bison coach Peter Woods, who has followed a similar selection policy in his other role in charge of Britain's national team, received a hot reception on Saturday from Fife fans, who chanted "Woods must go" and waved banners proclaiming "GB Hockey — Canucks Out".

The Flyers, with only four Canadians, beat the Bison, containing 10 players with a Canadian background, 9–3.

Sport in brief

Baseball

The Cleveland Indians' murderers' row of a batting line-up was locked up for another night on Sunday, when the Atlanta Braves took a 2–0 lead in the World Series.

Tom Glavine limited the Indians, who led the major leagues in batting, scoring and home runs, to three hits in six innings, and three relievers pitched in to help the Braves win 4–3. "I don't know of anyone in their rotation that we're going to have an easy time with," said the Indians manager Mike Hargrove.

Eddie Murray's homer gave Cleveland a 2–0 lead in the second inning but Atlanta pulled level and then went 4–2 ahead in the sixth on Javier Lopez's two-run homer.

Equestrianism

John Whitaker, riding the 16-year-old Everest Grannusch, won the £300,000 Pulsar Grand Prix at Monterrey's Club Hipico La Silla in Mexico. He had a clear first round and his second was marred only by a time fault.

Rugby Union

Tony Clement, the Swansea and Wales full-back, will be out of action for the rest of the season after injuring his right knee against Newport 10 days ago. "The injury is more serious than we first thought," said the Swansea team manager Baden Evans.

Clement, who has torn a lateral ligament and damaged a sub-cruciate ligament, will undergo surgery this week.

Clement . . . out for the season

Newcastle have signed another player. The 34-year-old former West Hartlepool lock John Dixon has joined them on a short-term basis.

Squash

England's world No. 6 Simon Parke should climb another place in the world rankings after reaching the final of the US Open at Providence, *writes Richard Jago*. The former world junior champion came within a point of taking the second game when his drive just caught the tin before going down 11–15, 16–17, 8–15 to the world champion Jansher Khan of Pakistan.

Pakistan have lost their appeal against their seeding for the world championships next month. They objected to being placed behind Australia, whom they beat in the final two years ago, but the WSF seedings committee argued that their team has been significantly weakened by the retirement of Jahangir Khan.

Boxing

King corner calls Maffia

Ian Katz in New York

FIFTEEN floors above downtown Manhattan, in Judge Lawrence McKenna's federal courtroom, they were waiting for Mr Maffia yesterday morning.

By lunchtime the former "controller" of Don King Productions had made a handful of tantalising appearances in the court record. His name has appeared on much of the paperwork for King's fights. A witness from the Nevada Athletic Commission described "getting Mr Maffia on the phone for the chairman".

Joseph Maffia — referred to invariably as Joe — is the key witness in the trial of the outsize boxing promoter for allegedly defrauding Lloyds of London out of $350,000 (£220,000) by making an illegal insurance claim following cancellation of a 1991 Julio Cesar Chavez fight.

The US government's nine-count indictment against King claims he tricked Lloyds into paying him $350,000 by persuading them he had advanced the sum to Chavez as a non-refundable payment to cover "maintenance and training" expenses after the boxer's bout with Harold Brazier was cancelled because of a sparring injury.

Prosecutors say the promoter told his staff to insert a clause describing the "unrefundable" payment into a contract which had already been signed by Chavez. They claim such payments are usually returned by boxers if a fight is cancelled and insurers would not usually reimburse such recoverable expenses.

The trial has disrupted King's preparations for Mike Tyson's November 4 match with Buster Mathis Jnr and, if convicted, his career could be further hindered by a five-year prison sentence and up to $2.25 million in fines.

King did not look like a man in deep trouble. Dressed in an elegant dark suit, alligator skin shoes and a matching tie and handkerchief, he made sure to swivel his chair slightly to allow the courtroom artists a clear view of his profile.

It is scarcely surprising that King feels at ease in a courtroom. Between 1951 and 1966, when he ran Cleveland's lucrative "numbers" racket, he was arrested 35 times. He served just under four years in prison for a 1967 conviction on charges of first-degree manslaughter, escaping prosecution for an earlier killing ruled "justifiable homicide".

A decade ago, after winning acquittal of 23 counts of federal tax evasion, he took the jurors who had passed judgment on him to London to see the Witherspoon-Bruno fight.

If it is not quite the Simpson dream team, King has assembled some formidable legal firepower. His silvery lead attorney Peter Fleming shot to fame in the Seventies when he won acquittal for John Mitchell, the US Attorney General who ran President Nixon's Watergate-tainted Campaign To Re-Elect The President.

So far things have not been going well for King. Last week Chavez testified that he had never seen the clause which referred to unrefundable expenses and had not received any of the insurance money paid to King after the Brazier fight was cancelled.

Though he had borrowed $736,000 from King two months before the fight, he had received only $80,000 for training expenses. King had given him no indication that he need not repay $350,000 of the $736,000 and he remained in hock to the promoter for more than $1.5 million.

King claims that the contract he sent to Lloyds was legitimate and that his insurance covered both training expenses and the cash advanced to Chavez. In highly technical and unedifying testimony yesterday morning an official of the Nevada Athletic Commission explained the intricacies of a fighter's "pay-off verification sheet" and the special circumstances under which a deduction for "hotel costs" could be made from a boxer's purse: "Sometimes fighters get a little rumbustious and trash the room."

Maffia was expected to take the stand yesterday afternoon. Over lunch in the canteen King and his party ruminated over the lamentable World Series performance of his hometown Cleveland Indians. "It ain't over 'til the fat lady sings," one of his associates said. King hopes not.

Rugby League

Cooks' Davys in final focus

Paul Fitzpatrick

IAN LUCAS, the former Wigan forward and now Leigh's coach, will be at Gigg Lane in Bury tonight casting his eye over the World Cup's Emerging Nations final between Ireland and the Cook Islands.

Like everyone else he has been impressed with the Cook Islands scrum-half Ali Davys and is hoping to sign the player, who has played for Gold Coast in Australia's Winfield Cup. In a talented side Davys is the man Ireland will need to contain.

From the outset the Cooks have been favourites for a competition which, like its senior counterpart, has exceeded expectations. "Things could not have gone better," says Neil Tunnicliffe, the tournament co-ordinator. "The football on the field, as with the senior tournament, has spoken for itself and people have been surprised by the standards."

Ireland, who have beaten Moldova and Morocco, have a double incentive, according to their joint-coach Terry Flanagan. "Victory would be a tremendous boost for the development of rugby league in Ireland and we want to compete in the World Cup proper next time round.

"There are already five thriving club sides in Ireland. Three more are targeted with the intention of starting an all-Ireland league next March."

Jason Robinson, the Wigan winger, is England's major fitness concern for Saturday's senior final with Australia at Wembley. He damaged a foot in the semi-final win over Wales at Old Trafford and his condition is said to be "worrying" the England coach Phil Larder.

Andy Farrell is expected to recover from a groin strain while Shaun Edwards, the England captain who has not played since the opening match, should be available for selection after recovering from a knee infection.

Warrington, meanwhile, have warned Cardiff rugby union club not to try to sign Jonathan Davies as an amateur. The Welsh club have been pursuing Davies, who is 33 today, but his contract with Warrington runs until June 1997. "Davies cannot go anywhere without our permission," said Graham Armstrong, the Warrington chief executive.

"If Jonathan decides to retire there is not a lot we can do," added Peter Higham, the Warrington chairman. "We have always told him he can go back as long as we receive compensation. But we will not be taken to the cleaners by the hypocrites from south Wales."

Snooker

Davis takes his time to rule

Clive Everton

EXPERIENCE prevailed over promise as Steve Davis defeated Matthew Stevens 5–2 to reach the quarter-finals of the Skoda Grand Prix at the Crowtree Centre in Sunderland yesterday.

"I've never played anyone like that before, apart from Terry Griffiths," said Stevens, an 18-year-old Welshman. "It's a different game but he's brilliant at what he does."

Stevens, a former Welsh under-18 champion, began his second professional season at No. 236 in the rankings but has already moved up to a provisional 85th. He took the opening frame and then made it 2–0 with an 86 clearance after Davis, in with 50, had failed with a three-ball plant.

Davis then began to slow the tempo and took the 27-minute third frame, the 49-minute fourth and then, changing gear with a 57 break, the fifth to lead 3–2.

Stevens almost snatched the sixth from 40 behind but, on 38, missed a tricky pink which Davis potted. The six-times world champion added the clinching frame to go through to meet Steve James, who has not played in a quarter-final since February 1992.

Married to their sport, page 13

Browlin heads for Leeds, page 14

Taylor thrown to the Wolves, page 14

Hussein's last chance, page 15

SportsGuardian

WARREN STRIKES A NOTE OF SANITY AMID THE USUAL NONSENSE

Boxing hype springs eternal

John Duncan finds the pre-fight talk as grim as ever despite deaths in the ring

Fatalistic attraction . . . James Oyebola and Scott Welch square up in Park Lane as the war of words begins for their British title bout PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

"THE GUY that died, what's he called?" asked James Oyebola, under his breath to Frank Warren seconds before boxing re-entered the gory land of hype nine days after the death of James Murray with a press conference at the Dorchester Hotel ahead of Oyebola's British heavyweight title defence against Scott Welch.

Oyebola has been sparring with Evander Holyfield in the United States for two months and can perhaps be forgiven his forgetfulness, but the brutal ritualistic pre-fight, pre-playschool banter goes on, oblivious to any distaste felt about the sport beyond its inner circle. Your 10-year-old child might recognise the following dialogue.

Welch: "You've had your chance. You had the WBC and gave it away. You ain't going to earn any money."

Oyebola: "At least I got it [the title]. What's your problem?"

Welch: "What you gonna do after this fight?"

Oyebola: "What you gonna do? Look who's talking."

Welch: "If I'd have had the WBC I would have made money out of it."

Oyebola: "I will advise you. You own a place for old people, right? I will be ending up in there, because I don't have much. I don't have no Porsche and I want these things."

Welch: "Well, I'll keep you a room, don't worry . . ."

Oyebola: "And if I keep the British title I will get those things. It's nothing personal, it's just business."

Frank Warren (embarrassed): "Now let's calm it down and take the heat out of all of that . . ."

Thank goodness for Warren. "You've seen it today. I don't like hearing the things that they say either," he said. "We don't tell them to talk like that you know, they just do it, and I have to say it does leave a bad taste at a time like this. But when they say things like I'm going to kill him, it's just an expression. They're not Oxbridge graduates these boys, they just don't express themselves too well sometimes."

Which is in sharp contrast to Warren himself who expresses with honesty his own renewed doubts about the sport which gives him a living. He yesterday announced that he had set up a trust fund to guarantee every boxer in the country — there are an estimated 800 — access to an MRI scan, which is a more sophisticated early detector of brain damage than the CT scans currently in use by boxers. MRI scans are not widely used, said Warren, because they are, at £500, too expensive. The trust will be called the Murray Stone fund after James Murray and Bradley Stone, the two most recent British boxing victims.

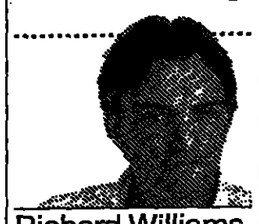
Warren's normally quicksilver smile looks a little ring rusty, his voice resigned to the existence of the sport rather than enthusiastic about it. "I've spent a long time defending boxing and trying to justify it and I'm not doing that any more," he said. "It's there until there is something different for these guys to do. Most come from poor backgrounds and it's the only chance they've got of getting a living, the only chance they've got of dignity rather than the dole.

We don't need people saying kill the sport because they've got nothing better to give them."

All they can give Marvin Corpuz, 19, and Restituto Espinell, 19, is a decent burial. Both died from head injuries sustained in Philippine rings in the past seven days. Corpuz died in hospital at the weekend with Manila papers reporting that he had told his corner after the eighth round that he wanted to quit but a jeering crowd urged him on, shouting "no surrender".

Not that boxers need much encouragement in that regard. "This is something I love so much that, if it's going to take my life, then so be it," said Oyebola.

The driving force of a champion



Richard Williams

IT IS the measure of a true champion, maybe the only one that really matters. You win something once and you go straight back out and win it again. Then nobody can say of the first time that it was a fluke, or you won it in a bad year, or the other guy's luck took a holiday.

That is what Michael Schumacher did in Japan on Sunday, when he became the youngest man to win two world championships back to back. Whatever happens to him in future, nothing can remove or reduce that achievement.

His engineer, Pat Symonds, said after the race that this was a more satisfying victory than last year. There had been so much suspicion, so much controversy surrounding Benetton, Symonds said, that the team's pleasure was ruined.

That goes for the rest of us, too. Blighted early on by the deaths of Senna and Ratzenberger, the 1994 season degenerated into chaos. Scruples and sportsmanship were suddenly as obsolete as string-backed gloves and cork helmets. And for most of the time this season has not presented much of an improvement, the heat of rivalry exaggerating the arrogance of Schumacher's smile and the resentment behind Damon Hill's answering glare. While that may be good for the short-term audience ratings, it risks alienating not only a certain kind of enthusiast but also the sponsors, whose tens of millions of dollars maintain the material prosperity of the sport.

INTERESTINGLY, it is Schumacher who in recent weeks appears to have restored its moral prosperity. Just as his rivals were coming apart at the seams, the champion produced a series of performances that demonstrated why the game is worth playing. In the rain at Spa, against the odds at the Nürburgring and in a complex battle of wits at Aida last weekend he constructed a triptych illustrating every facet of his remarkable talent.

All of it was summarised on Sunday in an unforgettable piece of theatre lasting less than half a minute, when he made his decisive move with the race less than one third gone. Jean Alesi, Hill and Schumacher headed for the pits together: second, third and fourth, nose to tail. Schumacher had been biding his time, but in the pits his brain was running faster as he risked taking on a small amount of fuel in order to leave the pit lane first.

By the time he made his exit Alesi was several lengths behind him. Hill, alas, was stranded as the mechanics struggled with a sticking wheel nut. But the drama was not over. At that moment Eddie Irvine and Heinz-Harald Frentzen were coming down the straight, dicing hard as they converged with Schumacher at the entrance to the first turn. The ruthlessness with which the Benetton driver denied them the chance to pass represented as explicit a statement of self-belief as he could have made without a pen and paper.

YET there was more to it than just a display of aggression. By going right to the limit in order to stay ahead of Irvine and Frentzen, Schumacher ensured there would be a cushion between himself and the two men who had followed him out of the pits. Now he was free from harassment and could concentrate on the pursuit of the leader, David Coulthard. As a combination of cool, strategic planning and instant tactical improvisation it was the perfect cameo of his mastery.

Later the others made their excuses. Coulthard said he had been stuck behind slower drivers, while Hill had bad luck in the pits. But Schumacher never gets stuck in traffic; like Senna before him, he makes the smaller fry get out of the way. And his pit crew never seem to fumble a wheel change.

The Benetton team is well drilled, but it is not perfect. Its No. 2 drivers have experienced trouble during pit stops in the past couple of seasons — Jos Verstappen with a refuelling fire and Johnny Herbert with a jack left hooked under the rear of his car. These things don't happen to Schumacher because he forces everyone around him to raise their game. This, again, is a lesson learnt from Senna, but not everyone is equipped to put it into practice.

Were he to have stayed with Benetton for another season, the odds would have been on a third consecutive title for Schumacher. His decision to move to Ferrari, where no driver has won the championship since 1979, confronts him with the biggest challenge of his young life. But after Sunday's race, who would put their money anywhere else?

Stewart takes the gloves for a start

Edward Harris in Johannesburg

ALEC STEWART has told Ray Illingworth that he wants to keep wicket again and the England chairman has taken him at his word: the job is his tomorrow.

No sooner had Stewart convinced himself and everyone else that his right index finger had made a full recovery from its latest break than he has been selected to open and wear the gloves in the first serious match of England's South African tour against Eastern Transvaal in Springs.

It might seem an unnecessary risk to put his damaged digit in the firing line so soon but that is not how Stewart sees it. "Wicketkeeping has never been the problem," he said. "The breaks I've had have all been done batting.

"The finger is fine now and I've told the chairman to treat me as normal when it comes to selection, which means I'm available to bat and keep wicket if that's what they want."

If Illingworth asked him, Stewart would no doubt open the bowling, bring on the drinks and drive the team bus, too, but it is his very keenness which has been part of his downfall over the past 12 months, during which he has missed six Tests through injury.

His troubles with the finger began a year ago when Craig White broke it in a practice game in Australia. He was hit twice more on tour, the second time when he played in Bendigo before the finger was healed in an attempt to get back into the last two Tests.

Last July Middlesex's Richard Johnson struck the finger again in a county match but, with the help of repeated pain-killing injections, Stewart was keeping wicket four days later in the third Test at Edgbaston. It was to be his last match of the summer and up until two weeks before the winter tour began there were still worries that the finger had not healed completely.

Stewart, however, is nothing if not bold and his ability to keep wicket does give England an extra option. As soon as he announced Stewart's role tomorrow, Illingworth said: "And before you ask, we've taken medical advice and the lad himself is keen to do it. We are not taking risks and he needs to do some keeping because he will have to do it later on."

Illingworth was referring to the seven one-day internationals against South Africa in the new year and the World Cup which follows in February, but there is always the possibility of Stewart performing his all-round role in the Tests once again if things start to go badly wrong.

England have named what they see as their strongest one-day side for tomorrow's floodlit match and the five not selected all get a game today in the tour's curtain-raiser against Nicky Oppenheimer's XI, a bejewelled social affair.

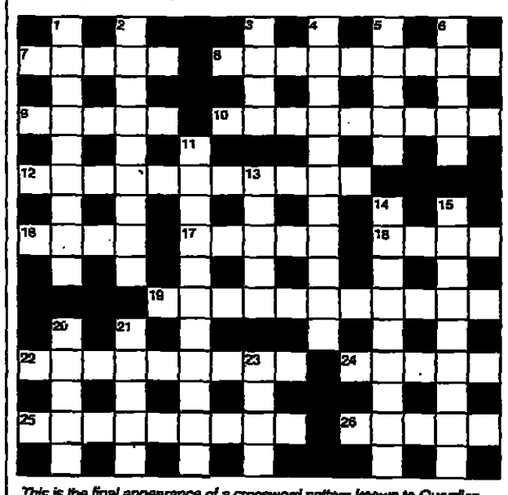
The team put together by the diamond king of South Africa includes Lancashire's new overseas signing, the pace bowler Steve Elworthy, the former Kent batsman Roy Pienaar, South Africa's promising Under-24 captain Dale Benkenstein, plus a leading light of the township programme, the opener Geoffrey Toyana, who spent last summer on the Lord's ground staff.

ENGLAND XI (v Oppenheimer's XI, Randjesfontein): Atherton (capt), Stewart, Ramprakash, Crawley, Smith, Russell (wkt), Watkinson, Gough, Croft, Illingworth, Malcolm.

ENGLAND XI (v Eastern Transvaal, Springs): Atherton (capt), Stewart (wkt), Hick, Thorpe, Smith, Ramprakash, Cork, Gough, Martin, Illingworth, Fraser.

Guardian Crossword No 20,480

Set by Fawley



This is the final appearance of a crossword pattern known to Guardian setters as Grid 22, a doddle for them, less so for solvers as most lights have more unchecked than checked letters. Clues have usually been eased to compensate. Solvers today will soon discover a feature of the grid which will help them to complete it.

Across

7 Return trips? They're cheaper than normal (5)

8 They support pedestrian American progress (9)

9 Notices real dish being smuggled on board (5)

10 Dense mist swirling round grounds, more than once? (9)

12 Horses start in wet weather (4-7)

16 Stop a visit? (4)

17 Green group may surround a small state (5)

18 Everything revolves round this, when a team's trapped (4)

19 Metalworker was disdainful, almost, about very small pieces (11)

22 Series reviewing queens — dry, in retrospect (9)

24 Guitar pieces, possibly with identical feedback (5)

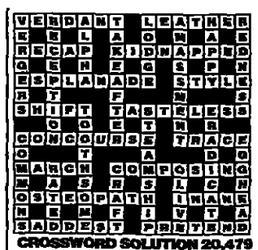
25 Parts of plant produced second batch of crumpets (9)

26 Bits of dirt flying about wartime general? (5)

Down

1 Speaks sharply to silly host showing holiday photos? (9)

2 Ocean rises among rocks — make rapid tracks! (9)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,479

3 Sounds of regret heard — reading a certain volume (4)

4 Criteria for promotion may contain odd ironies and obligations (11)

5 Crack troops fed iron — their intake is important (5)

6 Stays up, forgetting about satirical pieces (5)

11 Nimbus is all flickery, with briefly flashing images (11)

13 Turn, going up to visiting dignitary? (5)

14 Where you find lots of rising prices? (9)

15 Endorse jobs, giving pointers for progress (9)

20 Infiltrates notices about parking (5)

21 Shows resentment of such pets? (5)

23 High teas? (4)

Solution tomorrow

© Published by Guardian Newspapers Limited at 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, and at 164 Deansgate, Manchester M60 2RR. Printed at the Guardian Press Centre, 2 Millharbour, London E14 9NG; Trafford Park Printers, Longbridge Road, Manchester M17 1SL; Ter-Druckerei GmbH, Admiral-Rosendahl-Strasse 1, 6076 Neu-Isenburg/Zeppelinheim, Germany; Nord Eclair, 15/21 rue du Caire, BP69 - 59052 Roubaix, Cedex 1, France, for and on behalf of the Guardian and Manchester Evening News PLC. 48,380, Tuesday October 24, 1995. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office ISSN 0261-3077

London: Telephone 0171-278 2332. Telex 8811746 (Guard G). Fax 0171-837 2114; 0171-833 3342. Telephone sales 0171-611 9000

Manchester: Tel 0161-832 7200. Fax 0161-832 8351/834 8717. Tel sales 0161-834 9686

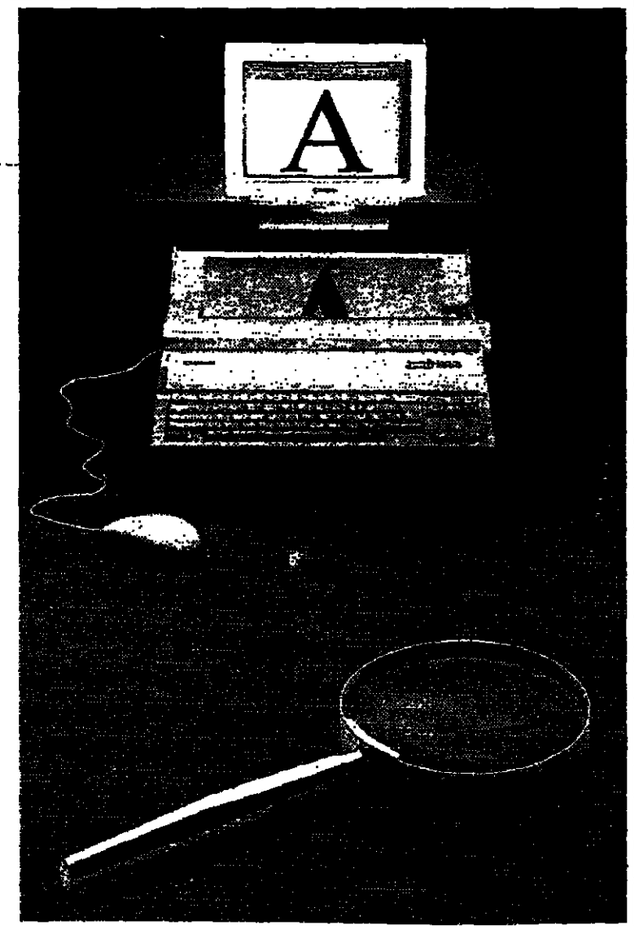
copying printing faxing imaging computing

You no longer need to read the small print

Feast your eyes on the Starwriter Pro 14" screen. A screen that provides an easy view of up to a million different typestyles and hundreds of clip art images on one easy to use machine. A word processor with the convenience of a built in high quality Bubble Jet printer, full screen spreadsheets with charts and graphs on the PRO 7000. Having said all that, here is some small print our 14" screen hasn't made bigger.

For more information Freephone 0500 246 246.

Starwriter Pro 5000 & 7000

If anyone can Canon can.

Canon